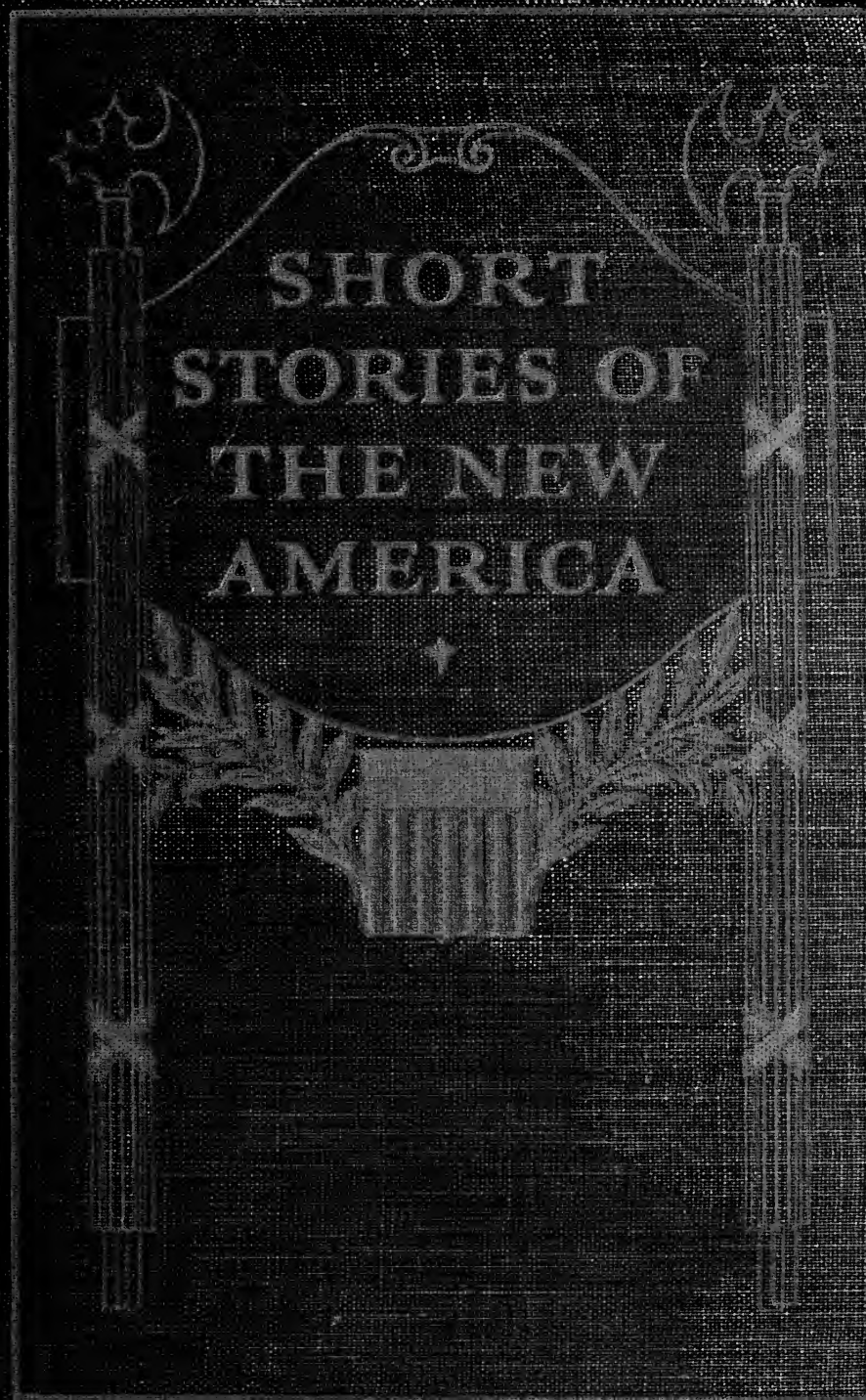
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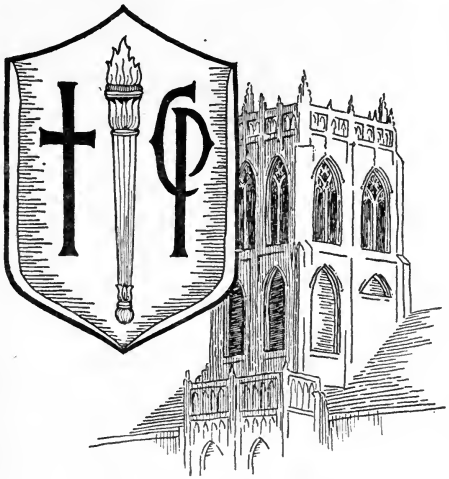

COLLEGE OF THE PACIFIC

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SHORT STORIES OF THE NEW AMERICA

SELECTED AND EDITED BY
MARY A. LASELLE
OF THE NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS, HIGH SCHOOLS

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book of short stories of modern American life is twofold.

First, these narratives give an interpretation of certain great forces and movements in the life of this age. All the authors represented are especially qualified to describe with force and feeling some phase of contemporary life. Thinking people everywhere realize that it is not enough to place before young folks the bare facts in regard to community and national life. The heart must be warmed, the feelings must be stirred, before the will can be aroused to noble action in any great movement. The first aim of this book, then, is to help to place clearly before young people the ideals of America through the medium of literature that will grip the attention and quicken the will to action.

Second, librarians have stated that there are very few compilations of modern short stories of interest and significance with which to meet the needs of young people who turn to the libraries for help in reading. It is hoped that this book may supply the need of libraries and homes for a book of live and valuable short stories.

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SOMETHING ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND THE STORIES

DOROTHY CANFIELD (Dorothea Frances Canfield Fisher), the author of *Home Fires in France* from which "A Little Kansas Leaven" was taken, is one of the most convincing and brilliant writers of the times. She always writes with a purpose, but as all of her work is characterized by originality, clearness, and the vital quality of human sympathy, there is not a dull line in any of her fiction or her educational writings.

Home Fires in France is a truthful record of Mrs. Fisher's impressions of life in tragic, devastated France during the Great War. During much of this period the author was working for the relief of those made blind by war. The tremendous appeal to America made by this book testifies to the sincerity and the genius of the author.

Dorothy Canfield was born in Lawrence, Kansas, in 1879. She obtained degrees from Ohio State University and from Columbia and studied and traveled abroad extensively, becoming an accomplished linguist. She is the author, under the name of Dorothy Canfield, of some of the most brilliant fiction of the day, *The Squirrel-Cage*, *The Bent Twig*, and other novels, and under her married name, Dorothy Canfield Fisher,

of some valuable educational works, *The Montessori Mother*, *Mothers and Children*, and other books of progressive ideas in education. Mrs. Fisher is now in France (1918) carrying on her work of mercy for the French soldiers and their families.

Elsie Singmaster (Mrs. Harold Lewars) lives in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and has written most entertaining stories of that historic region and also of the life of the descendants of the Dutch settlers of Pennsylvania. Among her many stories are *When Sarah Saved the Day*, *The Christmas Angel*, *The Flag of Eliphalet*, and *Stories of the Red Harvest and the Aftermath*. This author is a frequent contributor to magazines. In *The Survivors* we watch the conflict in the breast of stubborn old Adam Foust and rejoice with tears in our eyes when in the time of his friend's need, love conquers, and Adam and Henry march arm-in-arm down the village street. The story is told with the realism and beauty that characterize all of this author's work, much of which describes the everyday happenings of commonplace people with absolute fidelity.

Albert Payson Terhune (1872–) wrote his first book in collaboration with his distinguished mother, "Marion Harland," a well-known name in American homes. Mr. Terhune has written both novels and short stories and is especially successful in the latter form. Among his best stories are *Caritas*, *Night of*

the Dub, *Quiet*, and *The Wildcat*. In *The Wildcat* we watch with deepest interest the actions of a Southern mountaineer, who, torn from his backwoods home by the draft, was forced to adopt habits and manners and to submit to a discipline to which he was utterly foreign. The mental gropings of this young American and the manner in which he found his soul and his country make a fascinating story.

James Francis Dwyer is an Australian by birth. Mr. Dwyer has traveled extensively as a newspaper correspondent in Australia, the South Seas, and South Africa. He came to America in 1907. He is the author of *The White Waterfall*, *The Bust of Lincoln*, *The Spotted Panther*, *Breath of the Jungle*, and *Land of the Pilgrim's Pride*.

In *The Citizen* we have a beautiful picture of the vision of freedom that came to Big Ivan in downtrodden Russia, and we see him and the gentle Anna as they follow the beckoning finger of hope across Europe and the broad ocean until, in the words of Ivan, they found a home in a land "where a muzhik is as good as a prince of the blood."

Grace Coolidge is the wife of an Arapahoe Indian and has spent many years upon the Indian Reservations. She has told of her observations during these years in a charming little volume called *Teepee Neighbors*. We feel that the stories are true and they are filled with the pathos of life in the Reservations.

ARTHUR STANWOOD PIER is a distinguished writer of stories for young people and since 1896 one of the editors of *The Youth's Companion*. Among Mr. Pier's books are *The Boys of St. Timothy*, *The Jester of St. Timothy*, *Grannis of the Fifth*, *Jerry*, *The Plattsburgers*, *The Pedagogues*, and *The Women We Marry*. In *A Night Attack* we are given a vivid picture of the life of the soldier in training and of the sympathetic relations of officers and men.

MARY BRECHT PULVER has in *The Path of Glory* written one of the finest stories of the war. The manner in which a poor and humble family of mountaineers secured distinction and very real happiness, though it was tinged with sadness, makes a story of gripping interest and one that cannot fail to make every reader kinder and more humane in his intercourse with those less favored than himself.

FISHER AMES, Jr., is a well-known author of stories for boys. Mr. Ames has been appointed the official historian of the Red Cross Society and has gone to Europe (1918) as a commissioned officer in the United States Army.

In *Sergt. Warren Comes Back from France* the author makes us see very clearly the heroic figure of the blind soldier, and we realize that under the spell of such a personality the voters would unanimously decide to spend their money in France and relinquish the idea of making their town more beautiful. In the words of one of the villagers, "Sergt. Warren can see straight

even if he is blind," and the crowd will always respond to such leadership.

ARTHUR GUY EMPEY is an American and a soldier of the Great War, who after a life at the Front in which he did all that a brave man can do for the cause of humanity and survive, has written of some of his adventures in *Over the Top*, one of the best-known books of the war. In the chapter which we have called "The Coward" he shows the splendid regeneration of a despicable man.

The "hero" in this story is an Englishman, as Mr. Empey fought in the British army before America entered the war, but the phase of human nature portrayed in "The Coward" must have been observable in all the belligerent armies.

The cowardice of the few, however, was entirely concealed and atoned for by the splendid bravery of the many, and considerable numbers of men, who, when drafted, might have been designated as cowards, are leaving the army with a record of brave action in times of great danger.

FREDERICK ORIN BARTLETT, the author of *Chateau Thierry*, was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts, in 1876 and was educated in the public schools of that city, in a private school abroad, at Procter Academy, Andover, New Hampshire, and at Harvard. He has been connected with several Boston newspapers and is a well-known writer of short stories.

In *Chateau Thierry* he has portrayed very clearly

a certain type of easy-going, prosperous American,—the American who was aroused to the knowledge of higher ideals and to the exigencies of a world at war by the shock and the thrill that followed upon the active participation of the American forces in the great conflict.

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SHORT STORIES OF THE NEW AMERICA

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I

A LITTLE KANSAS LEAVEN

BETWEEN 1620 and 1630 Giles Boardman, an honest, sober, well-to-do English master-builder found himself hindered in the exercise of his religion. He prayed a great deal and groaned a great deal more (which was perhaps the Puritan equivalent of swearing), but in the end he left his old home and his prosperous business and took his wife and young children the long, difficult, dangerous ocean voyage to the New World. There, to the end of his homesick days, he fought a hand-to-hand battle with wild nature to wring a living from the soil. He died at fifty-four, an exhausted old man, but his last words were, "Praise God that I was allowed to escape out of the pit digged for me."

His family and descendants, condemned irrevocably to an obscure struggle for existence, did little more than keep themselves alive for about a hundred and thirty years, during which time Giles' spirit slept.

In 1775 one of his great-great-grandsons, Elmer Boardman by name, learned that the British soldiers were coming to take by force a stock of gunpowder con-

cealed in a barn for the use of the barely beginning American army. He went very white, but he kissed his wife and little boy good-bye, took down from its pegs his musket, and went out to join his neighbors in repelling the well-disciplined English forces. He lost a leg that day and clumped about on a wooden substitute all his hard-working life; but, although he was never anything more than a poor farmer, he always stood very straight with a smile on his plain face whenever the new flag of the new country was carried past him on the Fourth of July. He died, and his spirit slept.

In 1854 one of his grandsons, Peter Boardman, had managed to pull himself up from the family tradition of hard-working poverty, and was a prosperous grocer in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The struggle for the possession of Kansas between the Slave States and the North announced itself. It became known in Massachusetts that sufficiently numerous settlements of Northerners voting for a Free State would carry the day against slavery in the new Territory. For about a month Peter Boardman looked very sick and yellow, had repeated violent attacks of indigestion, and lost more than fifteen pounds. At the end of that time he sold out his grocery (at the usual loss when a business is sold out) and took his family by the slow, laborious caravan route out to the little new, raw settlement on the banks of the Kaw, which was called Lawrence for the city in the East which so many of its inhabitants had left. Here he recovered his health rapidly, and the look of distress left his face; indeed, he had a singular expression of secret happiness. He was caught by the Quantrell raid and

was one of those hiding in the cornfield when Quantrell's men rode in and cut them down like rabbits. He died there of his wounds. And his spirit slept.

His granddaughter, Ellen, plain, rather sallow, very serious, was a sort of office manager in the firm of Walker and Pennypacker, the big wholesale hardware merchants of Marshallton, Kansas. She had passed through the public schools, had graduated from the High School, and had planned to go to the State University; but the death of the uncle who had brought her up after the death of her parents made that plan impossible. She learned as quickly as possible the trade which would bring in the most money immediately, became a good stenographer, though never a rapid one, and at eighteen entered the employ of the hardware firm.

She was still there at twenty-seven, on the day in August, 1914, when she opened the paper and saw that Belgium had been invaded by the Germans. She read with attention what was printed about the treaty obligation involved, although she found it hard to understand. At noon she stopped before the desk of Mr. Pennypacker, the senior member of the firm, for whom she had a great respect, and asked him if she had made out correctly the import of the editorial. "*Had* the Germans promised they wouldn't ever go into Belgium in war?"

"Looks that way," said Mr. Pennypacker, nodding, and searching for a lost paper. The moment after, he had forgotten the question and the questioner.

Ellen had always rather regretted not having been

able to "go on with her education," and this gave her certain little habits of mind which differentiated her somewhat from the other stenographers and typewriters in the office with her, and from her cousin, with whom she shared the small bedroom in Mrs. Wilson's boarding-house. For instance, she looked up words in the dictionary when she did not understand them, and she had kept all her old schoolbooks on the shelf of the boarding-house bedroom. Finding that she had only a dim recollection of where Belgium was, she took down her old geography and located it. This was in the wait for lunch, which meal was always late at Mrs. Wilson's. The relation between the size of the little country and the bulk of Germany made an impression on her. "My! it looks as though they could just make one mouthful of it," she remarked. "It's *awfully* little."

"Who?" asked Maggie. "What?"

"Belgium and Germany."

Maggie was blank for a moment. Then she remembered. "Oh, the war. Yes, I know. Mr. Wentworth's fine sermon was about it yesterday. War is the wickedest thing in the world. Anything is better than to go killing each other. They ought to settle it by arbitration. Mr. Wentworth said so."

"They oughtn't to have done it if they'd promised not to," said Ellen. The bell rang for the belated lunch and she went down to the dining-room even more serious than was her habit.

She read the paper very closely for the next few days, and one morning surprised Maggie by the loudness of her exclamation as she glanced at the headlines.

"What's the matter?" asked her cousin. "Have they found the man who killed that old woman?" She herself was deeply interested in a murder case in Chicago.

Ellen did not hear her. "Well, thank *goodness!*" she exclaimed. "England is going to help France and Belgium!"

Maggie looked over her shoulder disapprovingly. "Oh, I think it's awful! Another country going to war! England a Christian nation, too! I don't see how Christians *can* go to war. And I don't see what call the Belgians had, anyhow, to fight Germany. They might have known they couldn't stand up against such a big country. All the Germans wanted to do was just to walk along the roads. They wouldn't have done any harm. Mr. Schnitzler was explaining it to me down at the office.

"They'd promised they wouldn't," repeated Ellen. "And the Belgians had promised everybody that they wouldn't let anybody go across their land to pick on France that way. They kept their promise and the Germans didn't. It makes me *mad!* I wish to goodness our country would help them!"

Maggie was horrified. "*Ellen Boardman,* would you want *Americans* to commit murder? You'd better go to church with me next Sunday and hear Mr. Wentworth preach one of his fine sermons."

Ellen did this, and heard a sermon on passive resistance as the best answer to violence. She was accustomed to accepting without question any statement she found in a printed book, or what any speaker said in any lecture. Also her mind, having been uniquely de-

voted for many years to the problems of office administration, moved with more readiness among letter-files and card-catalogues of customers than among the abstract ideas where now, rather to her dismay, she began to find her thoughts centering. More than a week passed after hearing that sermon before she said, one night as she was brushing her hair: "About the Belgians—if a robber wanted us to let him go through this room so he could get into Mrs. Wilson's room and take all her money and maybe kill her, would you feel all right just to snuggle down in bed and let him? Especially if you had told Mrs. Wilson that she needn't ever lock the door that leads into our room, because you'd see to it that nobody came through?"

"Oh, but," said Maggie, "Mr. Wentworth says it is only the German *Government* that wanted to invade Belgium, that the German soldiers just hated to do it. If you could fight the German Kaiser, it'd be all right."

Ellen jumped at this admission. "Oh, Mr. Wentworth does think there are *some* cases where it isn't enough just to stand by, and say you don't like it?"

Maggie ignored this. "He says the people who really get killed are only the poor soldiers that aren't to blame."

Ellen stood for a moment by the gas, her hair up in curl-papers, the light full on her plain, serious face, sallow above the crude white of her straight, unornamented nightgown. She said, and to her own surprise her voice shook as she spoke: "Well, suppose the real robber stayed down in the street and only sent up here

to rob and kill Mrs. Wilson some men who just hated to do it, but were too afraid of him not to. Would you think it was all right for us to open our door and let them go through without trying to stop them?"

Maggie did not follow this reasoning, but she received a disagreeable, rather daunting impression from the eyes which looked at her so hard, from the stern, quivering voice. She flounced back on her pillow, saying impatiently: "I don't know what's got into you, Ellen Boardman. You look actually *queer*, these days! What do *you* care so much about the Belgians for? You never heard of them before all this began! And everybody knows how immoral French people are."

Ellen turned out the gas and got into bed silently.

Maggie felt uncomfortable and aggrieved. The next time she saw Mr. Wentworth she repeated the conversation to him. She hoped and expected that the young minister would immediately furnish her with a crushing argument to lay Ellen low, but instead he was silent for a moment, and then said: "That's rather an interesting illustration, about the burglars going through your room. Where does she get such ideas?"

Maggie disavowed with some heat any knowledge of the source of her cousin's eccentricities. "I don't *know* where! She's a stenographer downtown."

Mr. Wentworth looked thoughtful and walked away, evidently having forgotten Maggie.

In the days which followed, the office-manager of the wholesale hardware house more and more justified the accusation of looking "queer." It came to be so noticeable that one day her employer, Mr. Pennypacker, asked

her if she didn't feel well. "You've been looking sort of under the weather," he said.

She answered, "I'm just *sick* because the United States won't do anything to help Belgium and France."

Mr. Pennypacker had never received a more violent shock of pure astonishment. "Great Scotland!" he ejaculated, "what's that to *you?*"

"Well, I live in the United States," she advanced, as though it were an argument.

Mr. Pennypacker looked at her hard. It was the same plain, serious, rather sallow face he had seen for years bent over his typewriter and his letter-files. But the eyes were different—anxious, troubled.

"It makes me sick," she repeated, "to see a great big nation picking on a little one that was only keeping its promise."

Her employer cast about for a conceivable reason for the aberration. "Any of your folks come here from there?" he ventured.

"Gracious, *no!*" cried Ellen, almost as much shocked as Maggie would have been at the idea that there might be "foreigners" in her family. She added: "But you don't have to be related to a little boy, do you, to get mad at a man that's beating him up, especially if the boy hasn't done anything he oughtn't to?"

Mr. Pennypacker stared. "I don't know that I ever looked at it that way." He added: "I've been so taken up with that lost shipment of nails, to tell the truth, that I haven't read much about the war. There's always *some* sort of a war going on over there in Europe, seems

to me." He stared for a moment into space, and came back with a jerk to the letter he was dictating.

That evening, over the supper-table, he repeated to his wife what his stenographer had said. His wife asked, "That little sallow Miss Boardman that never has a word to say for herself?" and upon being told that it was the same, said wonderingly, "Well, what ever started *her* up, I wonder?" After a time she said: "*Is* Germany so much bigger than Belgium as all that? Pete, go get your geography." She and her husband and their High School son gazed at the map. "It looks that way," said the father. "Gee! They must have had their nerve with them! Gimme the paper." He read with care the war-news and the editorial which he had skipped in the morning, and as he read he looked very grave, and rather cross. When he laid the paper down he said, impatiently: "Oh, damn the war! Damn Europe, anyhow!" His wife took the paper out of his hand and read in her turn the news of the advance into Northern France.

Just before they fell asleep his wife remarked out of the darkness, "Mr. Scheidemann, down at the grocery, said to-day the war was because the other nations were jealous of Germany."

"Well, I don't know," said Mr. Pennypacker heavily, "that I'd have any call to take an ax to a man because I thought he was jealous of me."

"That's so," admitted his wife.

During that autumn Ellen read the papers, and from time to time broke her silence and unburdened her mind to the people in the boarding-house. They considered

her unbalanced on the subject. The young reporter on the Marshallton *Herald* liked to lead her on to "get her going," as he said—but the others dodged whenever the war was mentioned and looked apprehensively in her direction.

The law of association of ideas works, naturally enough, in Marshallton, Kansas, quite as much at its ease as in any psychological laboratory. In fact Marshallton was a psychological laboratory with Ellen Boardman, an undefined element of transmutation. Without knowing why, scarcely realizing that the little drab figure had crossed his field of vision, Mr. Pennypacker found the war recurring to his thoughts every time he saw her. He did not at all enjoy this, and each time that it happened he thrust the disagreeable subject out of his mind with impatience. The constant recurrence of the necessity for this effort brought upon his usually alert, good-humored face an occasional clouded expression like that which darkened his stenographer's eyes. When Ellen came into the dining-room of the boarding-house, even though she did not say a word, every one there was aware of an unpleasant interruption to the habitual, pleasant current of their thoughts directed upon their own affairs. In self-defense some of the women took to knitting polo-caps for Belgian children. With those in their hands they could listen, with more reassuring certainty that she was "queer," to Miss Boardman's comments on what she read in the newspaper. Every time Mr. Wentworth, preaching one of his excellent, civic-minded sermons on caring for the babies of the poor, or organizing a playground for the

children of the factory workers, or extending the work of the Ladies' Guild to neighborhood visits, caught sight of that plain, very serious face looking up at him searchingly, expectantly, he wondered if he had been right in announcing that he would not speak on the war because it would certainly cause dissension among his congregation.

One day, in the middle of winter, he found Miss Boardman waiting for him in the church vestibule after every one else had gone. She said, with her usual directness: "Mr. Wentworth, do you think the French ought to have just let the Germans walk right in and take Paris? Would you let them walk right in and take Washington?"

The minister was a young man, with a good deal of natural heat in his composition, and he found himself answering this bald question with a simplicity as bald: "No, I wouldn't."

"Well, if they did right, why don't we help them?" Ellen's homely, monosyllabic words had a ring of despairing sincerity.

Mr. Wentworth dodged them hastily. "We *are* helping them. The charitable effort of the United States in the war is something astounding. The statistics show that we have helped. . . ." He was going on to repeat some statistics of American war-relief just then current, when Mr. Scheidemann, the prosperous German grocer, a most influential member of the First Congregational Church, came back into the vestibule to look for his umbrella, which he had forgotten after the service. By a reflex action beyond his control, the minister stopped

talking about the war. He and Miss Boardman had, for just long enough so that he realized it, the appearance of people "caught" discussing something they ought not to mention. The instant after, when Ellen had turned away, he felt the liveliest astonishment and annoyance at having done this. He feared that Miss Boardman might have the preposterous notion that he was *afraid* to talk about the war before a German. This idea nettled him intolerably. Just before he fell asleep that night he had a most disagreeable moment, half awake, half asleep, when he himself entertained the preposterous idea which he had attributed to Miss Boardman. It woke him up, broad awake, and very much vexed. The little wound he had inflicted on his own vanity smarted. Thereafter at any mention of the war he straightened his back to a conscious stiffness, and raised his voice if a German were within hearing. And every time he saw that plain, dull face of the stenographer, he winced.

On the 8th of May, 1915, when Ellen went down to breakfast, the boarding-house dining-room was excited. Ellen heard the sinking of the *Lusitania* read out aloud by the young reporter. To every one's surprise, she added nothing to the exclamations of horror with which the others greeted the news. She looked very white and left the room without touching her breakfast. She went directly down to the office and when Mr. Pennypacker came in at nine o'clock she asked him for a leave of absence, "maybe three months, maybe more," depending on how long her money held out. She explained that she had in the savings-bank five hundred

dollars, the entire savings of a lifetime, which she intended to use now.

It was the first time in eleven years that she had ever asked for more than her regular yearly fortnight, but Mr. Pennypacker was not surprised. "You've been looking awfully run-down lately. It'll do you good to get a real rest. But it won't cost you all *that!* Where are you going? To Battle Creek?"

"I'm not going to rest," said Miss Boardman, in a queer voice. "I'm going to work, in France."

The first among the clashing and violent ideas which this announcement aroused in Mr. Pennypacker's mind was the instant certainty that she could not have seen the morning paper. "Great Scotland—not much you're not! This is no time to be taking ocean trips. The submarines have just got one of the big ocean ships, hundreds of women and children drowned."

"I heard about that," she said, looking at him very earnestly, with a dumb emotion struggling in her eyes. "That's why I'm going."

Something about the look in her eyes silenced the business man for a moment. He thought uneasily that she had certainly gone a little dippy over the war. Then he drew a long breath and started in confidently to dissuade her.

At ten o'clock, informed that if she went she need not expect to come back, she went out to the savings-bank, drew out her five hundred dollars, went down to the station and bought a ticket to Washington, one of Mr. Pennypacker's arguments having been the great difficulty of getting a passport.

Then she went back to the boarding-house and began to pack two-thirds of her things into her trunk, and put the other third into her satchel, all she intended to take with her.

At noon Maggie came back from her work, found her thus, and burst into shocked and horrified tears. At two o'clock Maggie went to find the young reporter, and, her eyes swollen, her face between anger and alarm, she begged him to come and "talk to Ellen. She's gone off her head."

The reporter asked what form her mania took.

"She's going to France to work for the French and Belgians as long as her money holds out . . . all the money she's saved in all her life!"

The first among the clashing ideas which this awakened in the reporter's mind was the most heartfelt and gorgeous amusement. The idea of that dumb, backwoods, pie-faced stenographer carrying her valuable services to the war in Europe seemed to him the richest thing that had happened in years! He burst into laughter. "Yes, sure I'll come and talk to her," he agreed. He found her lifting a tray into her trunk. "See here, Miss Boardman," he remarked reasonably, "do you know what you need? You need a sense of humor! You take things too much in dead earnest. The sense of humor keeps you from doing ridiculous things, don't you know it does?"

Ellen faced him, seriously considering this. "Do you think all ridiculous things are bad?" she asked him, not as an argument, but as a genuine question.

He evaded this and went on. "Just look at yourself

now . . . just look at what you're planning to do. Here is the biggest war in the history of the world; all the great nations involved; millions and millions of dollars being poured out; the United States sending hundreds and thousands of packages and hospital supplies by the million; and nurses and doctors and Lord knows how many trained people . . . and, look! who comes here?—a stenographer from Walker and Pennypacker's, in Marshallton, Kansas, setting out to the war!"

Ellen looked long at this picture of herself, and while she considered it the young man looked long at her. As he looked, he stopped laughing. She said finally, very simply, in a declarative sentence devoid of any but its obvious meaning, "No, I can't see that that is so very funny."

At six o'clock that evening she was boarding the train for Washington, her cousin Maggie weeping by her side, Mrs. Wilson herself escorting her, very much excited by the momentousness of the event taking place under her roof, her satchel carried by none other than the young reporter, who, oddly enough, was not laughing at all. He bought her a box of chocolates and a magazine, and shook hands with her vigorously as the train started to pull out of the station. He heard himself saying, "Say, Miss Boardman, if you see anything for me to do over there, you might let me know," and found that he must run to get himself off the train before it carried him away from Marshallton altogether.

A fortnight from that day (passports were not so difficult to get in those distant days when war-relief work

was the eccentricity of only an occasional individual) she was lying in her second-class cabin, as the steamer rolled in the Atlantic swells beyond Sandy Hook. She was horribly seasick, but her plans were all quite clear. Of course she belonged to the Young Women's Christian Association in Marshallton, so she knew all about it. At Washington she had found shelter at the Y. W. C. A. quarters. In New York she had done the same thing, and when she arrived in Paris (if she ever did) she could of course go there to stay. Her roommate, a very sophisticated, much-traveled art student, was immensely amused by the artlessness of this plan. "I've got the *dernier cri* in greenhorns in my cabin," she told her group on deck. "She's expecting to find a Y. W. C. A. in *Paris!*"

But the wisdom of the simple was justified once more. There was a Y. W. C. A. in Paris, run by an energetic, well-informed American spinster. Ellen crawled into the rather hard bed in the very small room (the cheapest offered her) and slept twelve hours at a stretch, utterly worn out with the devastating excitement of her first travels in a foreign land. Then she rose up, comparatively refreshed, and with her foolish, ignorant simplicity inquired where in Paris her services could be of use. The energetic woman managing the Y. W. C. A. looked at her very dubiously.

"Well, there might be something for you over on the rue Pharaon, number 27. I hear there's a bunch of society dames trying to get up a *vestiaire* for refugees, there."

As Ellen noted down the address she said warningly,

her eyes running over Ellen's worn blue serge suit: "They don't pay anything. It's work for volunteers, you know."

Ellen was astonished that any one should think of getting pay for work done in France. "Oh, gracious, no!" she said, turning away.

The directress of the Y. W. C. A. murmured to herself: "Well, you certainly never can tell by *looks!*"

At the rue Pharaon, number 27, Ellen was motioned across a stony gray courtyard littered with wooden packing-cases, into an immense, draughty dark room, that looked as though it might have been originally the coach and harness-room of a big stable. This also was strewed and heaped with packing-cases in indescribable confusion, some opened and disgorging innumerable garments of all colors and materials, others still tightly nailed up. A couple of elderly workmen in blouses were opening one of these. Before others knelt or stood distracted-looking, elegantly dressed women, their arms full of parti-colored bundles, their eyes full of confusion. In one corner, on a bench, sat a row of wretchedly poor women and white-faced, silent children, the latter shod more miserably than the poorest negro child in Marshallton. Against a packing-case near the entrance leaned a beautifully dressed, handsome, middle-aged woman, a hammer in one hand. Before her at ease stood a pretty girl, the fineness of whose tightly drawn silk stockings, the perfection of whose gleaming coiffure, the exquisite hang and fit of whose silken dress filled Ellen Boardman with awe. In an instant her own stout cotton hose

hung wrinkled about her ankles, she felt on her neck every stringy wisp of her badly dressed hair, the dip of her skirt at the back was a physical discomfort. The older woman was speaking. Ellen could not help overhearing. She said forcibly: "No, Miss Parton, you will not come in contact with a single heroic poilu here. We have nothing to offer you but hard, uninteresting work for the benefit of ungrateful, uninteresting refugee women, many of whom will try to cheat and get double their share. You will not lay your hand on a single fevered masculine brow. . . ." She broke off, made an effort for self-control and went on with a resolutely reasonable air: "You'd better go out to the hospital at Neuilly. You can wear a uniform there from the first day, and be in contact with the men. I wouldn't have bothered you to come here, except that you wrote from Detroit that you would be willing to do *any*thing, scrub floors or wash dishes."

The other received all this with the indestructible good humor of a girl who knows herself very pretty and as well dressed as any one in the world. "I know I did, Mrs. Putnam," she said, amused at her own absurdity. "But now I'm here I'd be *too* disappointed to go back if I hadn't been working for the soldiers. All the girls expect me to have stories about the work, you know. And I can't stay very long, only four months, because my coming-out party is in October. I guess I *will* go to Neuilly. They take you for three months there, you know." She smiled pleasantly, turned with athletic grace and picked her way among the packing-cases back to the door.

Ellen advanced in her turn.

"Well?" said the middle-aged woman, rather grimly. Her intelligent eyes took in relentlessly every detail of Ellen's costume and Ellen felt them at their work.

"I came to see if I couldn't help," said Ellen.

"Don't you want direct contact with the wounded soldiers?" asked the older woman ironically.

"No," said Ellen with her habitual simplicity. "I wouldn't know how to do anything for them. I'm not a nurse."

"You don't suppose *that's* any obstacle!" ejaculated the other woman.

"But I never had *any*thing to do with sick people," said Ellen. "I'm the office-manager of a big hardware firm in Kansas."

Mrs. Putnam gasped like a drowning person coming to the surface. "You *are!*" she cried. "You don't happen to know shorthand, do you?"

"Gracious! of course I know shorthand!" said Ellen, her astonishment proving her competence.

Mrs. Putnam laid down her hammer and drew another long breath. "How much time can you give us?" she asked. "Two afternoons a week? Three?"

"Oh, *my!*" said Ellen, "I can give you all my time, from eight in the morning till six at night. That's what I came for."

Mrs. Putnam looked at her a moment as though to assure herself that she was not dreaming, and then, seizing her by the arm, she propelled her rapidly towards the back of the room, and through a small door into a dingy little room with two desks in it. Among the

heaped-up papers on one of these a blond young woman with inky fingers sought wildly something which she did not find. She said without looking up: "Oh, Aunt Maria, I've just discovered that that shipment of clothes from Louisville got acknowledged to the people in Seattle! And I can't find that letter from the woman in Indianapolis who offered to send children's shirts from her husband's factory. You said you laid it on your desk, last night, but I *cannot* find it. And do you remember what you wrote Mrs. Worthington? Did you say anything about the shoes?"

Ellen heard this but dimly, her gaze fixed on the confusion of the desks which made her physically dizzy to contemplate. Never had she dreamed that papers, sacred records of fact, could be so maltreated. In a reflex response to the last question of the lovely, distressed young lady she said: "Why don't you look at the carbon copy of the letter to Mrs. Worthington?"

"*Copy!*" cried the young lady, aghast. "Why, we don't begin to have time to write the letters *once*, let alone *copy* them!"

Ellen gazed horrified into an abyss of ignorance which went beyond her utmost imaginings. She said feebly, "If you kept your letters in a letter-file, you wouldn't ever lose them."

"There," said Mrs. Putnam, in the tone of one unexpectedly upheld in a rather bizarre opinion, "I've been saying all the time we ought to have a letter-file. But do you suppose you could *buy* one in Paris?" She spoke dubiously from the point of view of one who

had bought nothing but gloves and laces and old prints in Paris.

Ellen answered with the certainty of one who had found the Y. W. C. A. in Paris: "I'm sure you can. Why, they could not do business a *minute* without letter-files."

Mrs. Putnam sank into a chair with a sigh of bewilderment and fatigue, and showed herself to be as truly a superior person as she looked by making the following speech to the newcomer: "The truth is, Miss . . ."

"Boardman," supplied Ellen.

"Miss Boardman, the fact is that we are trying to do something which is beyond us, something we ought never to have undertaken. But we didn't know we were undertaking it, you see. And now that it is begun, it must not fail. All the wonderful American good-will which has materialized in that room full of packing-cases must not be wasted, must get to the people who need it so direly. It began this way. We had no notion that we would have so great an affair to direct. My niece and I were living here when the war broke out. Of course we gave all our own clothes we could spare and all the money we could for the refugees. Then we wrote home to our American friends. One of my letters was published by chance in a New York paper and copied in a number of others. Everybody who happened to know my name"—(Ellen heard afterwards that she was of the holy of holies of New England families)—"began sending me money and boxes of clothing. It all arrived so suddenly, so

unexpectedly. We had to rent this place to put the things in. The refugees came in swarms. We found ourselves overwhelmed. It is impossible to find an English-speaking stenographer who is not already more than overworked. The only help we get is from volunteers, a good many of them American society girls like that one you . . ." she paused to invent a sufficiently savage characterization and hesitated to pronounce it. "Well, most of them are not quite so absurd as that. But none of them know any more than we do about keeping accounts, letters . . ."

Ellen broke in: "How do you keep your accounts, anyhow? Bound ledger, or the loose-leaf system?"

They stared. "I have been careful to set down everything I could *remember* in a little note-book," said Mrs. Putnam.

Ellen looked about for a chair and sat down on it hastily. When she could speak again, after a moment of silent collecting of her forces she said: "Well, I guess the first thing to do is to get a letter-file. I don't know any French, so I probably couldn't get it. If one of you could go . . ."

The pretty young lady sprang for her hat. "I'll go! I'll go, Auntie."

"And," continued Ellen, "you can't do anything till you keep copies of your letters and you can't make copies unless you have a typewriter. Don't you suppose you could rent one?"

"I'll rent one before I come back," said Eleanor, who evidently lacked neither energy nor good-will. She said to Mrs. Putnam: "I'm going, instead of you, so

that you can superintend opening those boxes. They are making a most horrible mess of it, I know."

"Before a single one is opened, you ought to take down the name and address of the sender, and then note the contents," said Ellen, speaking with authority. "A card-catalogue would be a good system for keeping that record, I should think, with dates of the arrival of the cases. And why couldn't you keep track of your refugees that way, too? A card for each family, with a record on it of the number in the family and of everything given. You could refer to it in a moment, and carry it out to the room where the refugees are received."

They gazed at her plain, sallow countenance in rapt admiration.

"Eleanor," said Mrs. Putnam, "bring back cards for a card-catalogue, hundreds of cards, thousands of cards." She addressed Ellen with a respect which did honor to her native intelligence. "Miss Boardman, wouldn't you better take off your hat? Couldn't you work more at your ease? You could hang your things here." With one sweep of her white, well-cared-for hand she snatched her own Parisian habiliments from the hanger and hook, and installed there the Marshallton wraps of Ellen Boardman. She set her down in front of the desk; she put in her hands the ridiculous little Russia leather-covered note-book of the "accounts"; she opened drawer after drawer crammed with letters; and with a happy sigh she went out to the room of the packing-cases, closing the door gently behind her, that she might not disturb the high-priestess of

business-management who already bent over those abominably misused records, her eyes gleaming with the sacred fire of system.

There is practically nothing more to record about the four months spent by Ellen Boardman as far as her work at the *vestiaire* was concerned. Every day she arrived at number 27 rue Pharaon at eight o'clock and put in a good hour of quiet work before any of the more or less irregular volunteer ladies appeared. She worked there till noon, returned to the Y. W. C. A., lunched, was in the office again by one o'clock, had another hour of forceful concentration before any of the cosmopolitan great ladies finished their lengthy *déjeuners*, and she stayed there until six in the evening, when every one else had gone. She realized that her effort must be not only to create a rational system of records and accounts and correspondence which she herself could manage, but a fool-proof one which could be left in the hands of the elegant ladies who would remain in Paris after she had returned to Kansas.

And yet, not so fool-proof as she had thought at first. She was agreeably surprised to find both Mrs. Putnam and her pretty niece perfectly capable of understanding a system once it was invented, set in working order, and explained to them. She came to understand that what, on her first encounter with them, she had naturally enough taken for congenital imbecility, was merely the result of an ignorance and an inexperience which remained to the end astounding to her. Their good-will was as great as their native capacity. Eleanor set herself resolutely, if very awkwardly, to learn the use of

the typewriter. Mrs. Putnam even developed the greatest interest in the ingenious methods of corraling and marshaling information and facts which were second nature to the business-woman. "I never saw anything more fascinating!" she cried the day when Ellen explained to her the workings of a system for cross-indexing the card-catalogues of refugees already aided. "How *do* you think of such things?"

Ellen did not explain that she generally thought of them in the two or three extra hours of work she put in every day, while Mrs. Putnam ate elaborate food.

It soon became apparent that there had been much "repeating" among the refugees. The number possible to clothe grew rapidly, far beyond what the "office force" could manage to investigate. Ellen set her face against miscellaneous giving without knowledge of conditions. She devised a system of visiting inspectors which kept track of all the families in their rapidly growing list. She even made out a sort of time-card for the visiting ladies which enabled the office to keep some track of what they did, and yet did not ruffle their leisure-class dignity . . . and this was really an achievement. She suggested, made out, and had printed an orderly report of what they had done, what money had come in, how it had been spent, what clothes had been given and how distributed, the number of people aided, the most pressing needs. This she had put in every letter sent to America. The result was enough to justify Mrs. Putnam's naïve astonishment and admiration of her brilliant idea. Packing-cases and checks flowed in by every American steamer.

Ellen's various accounting systems and card-catalogues responded with elastic ease to the increased volume of facts, as she of course expected them to; but Mrs. Putnam could never be done marveling at the cool certainty with which all this immense increase was handled. She had a shudder as she thought of what would have happened if Miss Boardman had not dropped down from heaven upon them. Dining out, of an evening, she spent much time expatiating on the astonishing virtues of one of her volunteers.

Ellen conceived a considerable regard for Mrs. Putnam, but she did not talk of her in dining out, because she never dined anywhere. She left the "office" at six o'clock and proceeded to a nearby bakery where she bought four sizable rolls. An apple cart supplied a couple of apples, and even her ignorance of French was not too great an obstacle to the purchase of some cakes of sweet chocolate. With these decently hidden in a small black hand-bag, she proceeded to the waiting-room of the Gare de l'Est where, like any traveler waiting for his train she ate her frugal meal; ate as much of it, that is, as a painful tightness in her throat would let her. For the Gare de l'Est was where the majority of French soldiers took their trains to go back to the front after their occasional week's furlough with their families.

No words of mine can convey any impression of what she saw there. No one who has not seen the Gare de l'Est night after night can ever imagine the sum of stifled human sorrow which filled it thickly, like a dreadful incense of pain going up before some cruel

god. It was there that the mothers, the wives, the sweethearts, the sisters, the children brought their priceless all and once more laid it on the altar. It was there that those horrible silent farewells were said, the more unendurable because they were repeated and repeated till human nature reeled under the burden laid on it by the will. The great court outside, the noisy echoing waiting-room, the inner platform which was the uttermost limit for those accompanying the soldiers returning to hell,—they were not only always filled with living hearts broken on the wheel, but they were thronged with ghosts, ghosts of those whose farewell kiss had really been the last, with ghosts of those who had watched the dear face out of sight and who were never to see it again. Those last straining, wordless embraces, those last, hot, silent kisses, the last touch of the little child's hand on the father's cheek which it was never to touch again . . . the nightmare place reeked of them!

The stenographer from Kansas had found it as simply as she had done everything else. "Which station do the families go to, to say good-bye to their soldiers?" she had asked, explaining apologetically that she thought maybe if she went there too she could help sometimes; there might be a heavy baby to carry, or somebody who had lost his ticket, or somebody who hadn't any lunch for the train.

After the first evening spent there, she had shivered and wept all night in her bed; but she had gone back the next evening, with the money she saved by eating bread and apples for her dinner; for of course the sweet

chocolate was for the soldiers. She sat there, armed with nothing but her immense ignorance, her immense sympathy. On that second evening she summoned enough courage to give some chocolate to an elderly shabby soldier, taking the train sadly, quite alone; and again to a white-faced young lad accompanied by his bent, poorly dressed grandmother. What happened in both those cases sent her back to the Y. W. C. A. to make up laboriously from her little pocket French dictionary and to learn by heart this sentence: "I am sorry that I cannot understand French. I am an American." Thereafter the surprised and extremely articulate Gallic gratitude which greeted her timid overtures, did not leave her so helplessly swamped in confusion. She stammered out her little phrase with a shy, embarrassed smile and withdrew as soon as possible from the hearty handshake which was nearly always the substitute offered for the unintelligible thanks. How many such handshakes she had! Sometimes as she watched her right hand, tapping on the typewriter, she thought: "Those hands which it has touched; they may be dead now. They were heroes' hands." She looked at her own with awe, because it had touched them.

Once her little phrase brought out an unexpected response from a rough-looking man who sat beside her on the bench waiting for his train, his eyes fixed gloomily on his great soldier's shoes. She offered him, shamefacedly, a little sewing-kit which she herself had manufactured, a pad of writing-paper and some envelopes. He started, came out of his bitter brooding, looked at her astonished, and, as they all did without exception,

read in her plain, earnest face what she was. He touched his battered trench helmet in a sketched salute and thanked her. She answered as usual that she was sorry she could not understand French, being an American. To her amazement he answered in fluent English, with an unmistakable New York twang: "Oh, you are, are you? Well, so'm I. Brought up there from the time I was a kid. But all my folks are French and my wife's French and I couldn't give the old country the go-by when trouble came."

In the conversation which followed Ellen learned that his wife was expecting their first child in a few weeks . . . "that's why she didn't come to see me off. She said it would just about kill her to watch me getting on the train. . . . Maybe you think it's easy to leave her all alone . . . the poor kid!" The tears rose frankly to his eyes. He blew his nose.

"Maybe I could do something for her," suggested Ellen, her heart beating fast at the idea.

"Gee! Yes! If you'd go to see her! She talks a little English!" he cried. He gave her the name and address, and when that poilu went back to the front it was Ellen Boardman from Marshallton, Kansas, who walked with him to the gate, who shook hands with him, who waved him a last salute as he boarded his train.

The next night she did not go to the station. She went to see the wife. The night after that she was sewing on a baby's wrapper as she sat in the Gare de l'Est, turning her eyes away in shame from the intolerable sorrow of those with families, watching for those occasional solitary or very poor ones whom alone she ven-

tured to approach with her timidly proffered tokens of sympathy.

At the Y. W. C. A. opinions varied about her. She was patently to every eye respectable to her last drop of pale blood. And yet *was* it quite respectable to go offering chocolate and writing-paper to soldiers you'd never seen before? Everybody knew what soldiers were! Some one finally decided smartly that her hat was a sufficient protection. It is true that her hat was not becoming, but I do not think it was what saved her from misunderstanding.

She did not always go to the Gare de l'Est every evening now. Sometimes she spent them in the little dormer-windowed room where the wife of the New York poilu waited for her baby. Several evenings she spent chasing elusive information from the American Ambulance Corps as to exactly the conditions in which a young man without money could come to drive an ambulance in France . . . the young man without money being of course the reporter on the Marshallton *Herald*.

It chanced to be on one of the evenings when she was with the young wife that the need came. She sat on the stairs outside till nearly morning. When it was quiet, she took the little new citizen of the Republic in her arms, tears of mingled thanksgiving and dreadful fear raining down her face, because another man-child had been born into the world. Would *he* grow up only to say farewell at the Gare de l'Est? Oh, she was not sorry that she had come to France to help in that war. She understood now, she understood.

It was Ellen who wrote to the father the letter announcing the birth of a child which gave him the right to another precious short furlough. It was Ellen who went down to the Gare de l'Est, this time to the joyful wait on the muddy street outside the side door from which the returning *permissionnaires* issued forth, caked with mud to their eyes. It was Ellen who had never before "been kissed by a man" who was caught in a pair of dingy, horizon-blue arms and soundly saluted on each sallow cheek by the exultant father. It was Ellen who was made as much of a godmother as her Protestant affiliations permitted . . . and oh, it was Ellen who made the fourth at the end of the furlough when (the first time the new mother had left her room) they went back to the Gare de l'Est. At the last it was Ellen who held the sleeping baby when the husband took his wife in that long, bitter embrace; it was Ellen who was not surprised or hurt that he turned away without a word to her . . . she understood that . . . it was Ellen whose arm was around the trembling young wife as they stood, their faces pressed against the barrier to see him for the last time; it was Ellen who went back with her to the silent desolation of the little room, who put the baby into the slackly hanging arms, and watched, her eyes burning with unshed tears, those arms close about the little new inheritor of humanity's woes. . . .

Four months from the time she landed in Paris her money was almost gone and she was quitting the city with barely enough in her pocket to take her back to Marshallton. As simply as she had come to Paris, she

now went home. She *belonged* to Marshallton. It was a very good thing for Marshallton that she did.

She gave fifty dollars to the mother of baby Jacques (that was why she had so very little left) and she promised to send her ten dollars every month as soon as she herself should be again a wage-earner. Mrs. Putnam and her niece, inconsolable at her loss, went down to the Gare du Quai d'Orsay to see her off, looking more in keeping with the elegant travelers starting for the Midi, than Ellen did. Her place, after all, had been at the Gare de l'Est. As they shook hands warmly with her, they gave her a beautiful bouquet, the evident cost of which stabbed her to the heart. What she could have done with that money!

"You have simply transformed the *vestiaire*, Miss Boardman," said Mrs. Putnam with generous but by no means exaggerating ardor. "It would certainly have sunk under the waves if you hadn't come to the rescue. I wish you *could* have stayed, but thanks to your teaching we'll be able to manage anything now."

After the train had moved off, Mrs. Putnam said to her niece in a shocked voice: "Third class! That long trip to Bordeaux! She'll die of fatigue. You don't suppose she is going back because she didn't have *money* enough to stay! Why, I would have paid anything to keep her." The belated nature of this reflection shows that Ellen's teachings had never gone more than skin deep and that there was still something lacking in Mrs. Putnam's grasp on the realities of contemporary life.

Ellen was again too horribly seasick to suffer much apprehension about submarines. This time she had as

cabin-mate in the unventilated second-class cabin the "companion" of a great lady traveling of course in a suite in first-class. This great personage, when informed by her satellites' nimble and malicious tongues of Ellen's personality and recent errand in France, remarked with authority to the group of people about her at dinner, embarking upon the game which was the seventh course of the meal: "I disapprove wholly of these foolish American volunteers . . . ignorant, awkward, provincial boors, for the most part, knowing nothing of all the exquisite old traditions of France, who thrust themselves forward. They make America a laughing-stock."

Luckily, Ellen, pecking feebly at the chilly, boiled potato brought her by an impatient stewardess, could not know this characterization.

She arrived in Marshallton, and was astonished to find herself a personage. Her departure had made her much more a figure in the town life than she had ever been when she was still walking its streets. The day after her departure the young reporter had written her up in the *Herald* in a lengthy paragraph, and not a humorous one either. The Sunday which she passed on the ocean after she left New York, Mr. Wentworth in one of his prayers implored the Divine blessing on "one of our number who has left home and safety to fulfil a high moral obligation and who even now is risking death in the pursuance of her duty as she conceives it." Every one knew that he meant Ellen Boardman, about whom they had all read in the *Herald*. Mr. Pennypacker took, then and there, a decision which

inexplicably lightened his heart. Being a good business-man, he did not keep it to himself, but allowed it to leak out the next time the reporter from the *Herald* dropped around for chance items of news. The reporter made the most of it, and Marshallton, already spending much of its time in discussing Ellen, read that "Mr. John S. Pennypacker, in view of the high humanitarian principles animating Miss Boardman in quitting his employ, has decided not to fill her position but to keep it open for her on her return from her errand of mercy to those in foreign parts stricken by the awful war now devastating Europe."

Then Ellen's letters began to arrive, mostly to Maggie, who read them aloud to the deeply interested boarding-house circle. The members of this, basking in reflected importance, repeated their contents to every one who would listen. In addition the young reporter published extracts from them in the *Herald*, editing them artfully, choosing the rare plums of anecdote or description in Ellen's arid epistolary style. When her letter to him came, he was plunged into despair because she had learned that he would have to pay part of his expenses if he drove an ambulance on the French front. By that time his sense of humor was in such total eclipse that he saw nothing ridiculous in the fact that he could not breathe freely another hour in the easy good-cheer of his care-free life. He revolved one scheme after another for getting money; and in the meantime let no week go by without giving some news from their "heroic fellow-townswoman in France." Highland Springs, the traditional rival and

enemy of Marshallton, felt outraged by the tone of proprietorship with which Marshallton people bragged of their delegate in France.

So it happened that when Ellen, fearfully tired, fearfully dusty after the long ride in the day-coach, and fearfully shabby in exactly the same clothes she had worn away, stepped wearily off the train at the well-remembered little wooden station, she found not only Maggie, to whom she had telegraphed from New York, but a large group of other people advancing upon her with outstretched hands, crowding around her with more respectful consideration than she had ever dreamed of seeing addressed to her obscure person. She was too tired, too deeply moved to find herself at home again, too confused, to recognize them all. Indeed a number of them knew her only by her fame since her departure. Ellen made out Maggie, who embraced her, weeping as loudly as when she had gone away; she saw Mrs. Wilson who kissed her very hard and said she was proud to know her; she saw with astonishment that Mr. Pennypacker himself had left business in office hours! He shook her hand with energy and said: "Well, Miss Boardman, very glad to see you safe back. We'll be expecting you back at the old stand just as soon as you've rested up from the trip." The intention of the poilu who had taken her in his arms and kissed her, had not been more cordial. Ellen knew this and was touched to tears.

There was the reporter from the *Herald*, too, she saw him dimly through the mist before her eyes, as he carried the satchel, the same he had carried five months

before with the same things in it. And as they put her in the "hack" (she had never ridden in the hack before) there was Mr. Wentworth, the young minister, who leaned through the window and said earnestly: "I am counting on you to speak to our people in the church parlors. You must tell us about things over there."

Well, she did speak to them! She was not the same person, you see, she had been before she had spent those evenings in the Gare de l'Est. She wanted them to know about what she had seen, and because there was no one else to tell them, she rose up in her shabby suit and told them herself. The first thing that came into her mind as she stood before them, her heart suffocating her, her knees shaking under her, was the strangeness of seeing so many able-bodied men not in uniform, and so many women not in mourning. She told them this as a beginning and got their startled attention at once, the men vaguely uneasy, the women divining with frightened sympathy what it meant to see all women in black.

Then she went on to tell them about the work for the refugees . . . not for nothing had she made out the card-catalogue accounts of those life-histories. "There was one old woman we helped . . . she looked some like Mrs. Wilson's mother. She had lost three sons and two sons-in-law in the war. Both of her daughters, widows, had been sent off into Germany to do forced labor. One of them had been a music-teacher and the other a dressmaker. She had three of the grandchildren with her. Two of them had dis-

appeared . . . just lost somewhere. She didn't have a cent left, the Germans had taken everything. She was sixty-seven years old and she was earning the children's living by doing scrubwoman's work in a slaughter-house. She had been a school-teacher when she was young.

"There were five little children in one family. The mother was sort of out of her mind, though the doctors said maybe she would get over it. They had been under shell-fire for five days, and she had seen three members of her family die there. After that they wandered around in the woods for ten days, living on grass and roots. The youngest child died then. The oldest girl was only ten years old, but she took care of them all somehow and used to get up nights when her mother got crazy thinking the shells were falling again."

Ellen spoke badly, awkwardly, haltingly. She told nothing which they might not have read, perhaps had read in some American magazine. But it was a different matter to hear such stories from the lips of Ellen Boardman, born and brought up among them. Ellen Boardman had *seen* those people, and through her eyes Marshallton looked aghast and for the first time believed that what it saw was real, that such things were happening to real men and women like themselves.

When she began to tell them about the Gare de l'Est she began helplessly to cry, but she would not stop for that. She smeared away the tears with her handkerchief wadded into a ball, she was obliged to stop frequently to blow her nose and catch her breath, but she had so much to say that she struggled on, saying it in a

shaking, uncertain voice, quite out of her control. Standing there before those well-fed, well-meaning, prosperous, *safe* countrymen of hers, it all rose before her with burning vividness, and burningly she strove to set it before them. It had all been said far better than she said it, eloquently described in many highly paid newspaper articles, but it had never before been said so that Marshallton understood it. Ellen Boardman, graceless, stammering, inarticulate, yet spoke to them with the tongues of men and angels because she spoke their own language. In the very real, very literal and wholly miraculous sense of the words, she brought the war—*home*—to them.

When she sat down no one applauded. The women were pale. Some of them had been crying. The men's faces were set and inexpressive. Mr. Wentworth stood up and cleared his throat. He said that a young citizen of their town (he named him, the young reporter) desired greatly to go to the French front as an ambulance driver, but being obliged to earn his living, he could not go unless helped out on his expenses. Miss Boardman had been able to get exact information about that. Four hundred dollars would keep him at the front for a year. He proposed that a contribution should be taken up to that end.

He himself went among them, gathering the contributions which were given in silence. While he counted them afterwards, the young reporter, waiting with an anxious face, swallowed repeatedly and crossed and uncrossed his legs a great many times. Before he had finished counting the minister stopped, reached over and

gave the other young man a handclasp. "I envy you," he said.

He turned to the audience and announced that he had counted almost enough for their purpose when he had come upon a note from Mr. Pennypacker saying that he would make up any deficit. Hence they could consider the matter settled. "Very soon, therefore, our town will again be represented on the French front."

The audience stirred, drew a long breath, and broke into applause.

Whatever the rest of the Union might decide to do, Marshallton, Kansas, had come into the war.

DOROTHY CANFIELD.

II

THE SURVIVORS

A Memorial Day Story

In the year 1868, when Memorial Day was instituted, Fosterville had thirty-five men in its parade. Fosterville was a border town; in it enthusiasm had run high, and many more men had enlisted than those required by the draft. All the men were on the same side but Adam Foust, who, slipping away, joined himself to the troops of his mother's Southern State. It could not have been any great trial for Adam to fight against most of his companions in Fosterville, for there was only one of them with whom he did not quarrel. That one was his cousin Henry, from whom he was inseparable, and of whose friendship for any other boys he was intensely jealous. Henry was a frank, open-hearted lad who would have lived on good terms with the whole world if Adam had allowed him to.

Adam did not return to Fosterville until the morning of the first Memorial Day, of whose establishment he was unaware. He had been ill for months, and it was only now that he had earned enough to make his way home. He was slightly lame, and he had lost two fingers of his left hand. He got down from the train at the station, and found himself at once in a great crowd. He knew no one, and no one seemed to know him. Without

asking any questions, he started up the street. He meant to go, first of all, to the house of his cousin Henry, and then to set about making arrangements to resume his long-interrupted business, that of a saddler, which he could still follow in spite of his injury.

As he hurried along he heard the sound of band music, and realized that some sort of a procession was advancing. With the throng about him he pressed to the curb. The tune was one which he hated; the colors he hated also; the marchers, all but one, he had never liked. There was Newton Towne, with a sergeant's stripe on his blue sleeve; there was Edward Green, a captain; there was Peter Allinson, a color-bearer. At their head, taller, handsomer, dearer than ever to Adam's jealous eyes, walked Henry Foust. In an instant of forgetfulness Adam waved his hand. But Henry did not see; Adam chose to think that he saw and would not answer. The veterans passed, and Adam drew back and was lost in the crowd.

But Adam had a parade of his own. In the evening, when the music and the speeches were over and the half-dozen graves of those of Fosterville's young men who had been brought home had been heaped with flowers, and Fosterville sat on doorsteps and porches talking about the day, Adam put on a gray uniform and walked from one end of the village to the other. These were people who had known him always; the word flew from step to step. Many persons spoke to him, some laughed, and a few jeered. To no one did Adam pay any heed. Past the house of Newton Towne, past the store of Ed Green, past the wide lawn of Henry Foust,

Stockton, Calif.

walked Adam, his hands clasped behind his back, as though to make more perpendicular than perpendicularity itself that stiff backbone. Henry Foust ran down the steps and out to the gate.

"Oh, Adam!" cried he.

Adam stopped, stock-still. He could see Peter Allinson and Newton Towne, and even Ed Green, on Henry's porch. They were all having ice-cream and cake together.

"Well, what?" said he, roughly.

"Won't you shake hands with me?"

"No," said Adam.

"Won't you come in?"

"Never."

Still Henry persisted.

"Some one might do you harm, Adam."

"Let them!" said Adam.

Then Adam walked on alone. Adam walked alone for forty years.

Not only on Memorial Day did he don his gray uniform and make the rounds of the village. When the Fosterville Grand Army Post met on Friday evenings in the post room, Adam managed to meet most of the members either going or returning. He and his gray suit became gradually so familiar to the village that no one turned his head or glanced up from book or paper to see him go by. He had from time to time a new suit, and he ordered from somewhere in the South a succession of gray, broad-brimmed military hats. The farther the war sank into the past, the straighter grew old Adam's back, the prouder his head. Sometimes, early

in the forty years, the acquaintances of his childhood, especially the women, remonstrated with him.

"The war 's over, Adam," they would say. "Can't you forget it?"

"Those G. A. R. fellows don't forget it," Adam would answer. "They haven't changed their principles. Why should I change mine?"

"But you might make up with Henry."

"That 's nobody's business but my own."

"But when you were children you were never separated. Make up, Adam."

"When Henry needs me, I'll help him," said Adam.

"Henry will never need you. Look at all he's got!"

"Well, then, I don't need him," declared Adam, as he walked away. He went back to his saddler shop, where he sat all day stitching. He had ample time to think of Henry and the past.

"Brought up like twins!" he would say. "Sharing like brothers! Now he has a fine business and a fine house and fine children, and I have nothing. But I have my principles. I ain't never truckled to him. Some day he'll need me, you 'll see!"

As Adam grew older, it became more and more certain that Henry would never need him for anything. Henry tried again and again to make friends, but Adam would have none of him. He talked more and more to himself as he sat at his work.

"Used to help him over the brook and bait his hook for him. Even built corn-cob houses for him to knock down, that much littler he was than me. Stepped out of the race when I found he wanted Annie. He

might ask me for *something!*" Adam seemed often to be growing childish.

By the year 1875 fifteen of Fosterville's thirty-five veterans had died. The men who survived the war were, for the most part, not strong men, and weaknesses established in prisons and on long marches asserted themselves. Fifteen times the Fosterville Post paraded to the cemetery and read its committal service and fired its salute. For these parades Adam did not put on his gray uniform.

During the next twenty years deaths were fewer. Fosterville prospered as never before; it built factories and an electric car line. Of all its enterprises Henry Foust was at the head. He enlarged his house and bought farms and grew handsomer as he grew older. Everybody loved him; all Fosterville, except Adam, sought his company. It seemed sometimes as though Adam would almost die from loneliness and jealousy.

"Henry Foust sittin' with Ed Green!" said Adam to himself, as though he could never accustom his eyes to this phenomenon. "Henry consortin' with Newt Towne!"

The Grand Army Post also grew in importance. It paraded each year with more ceremony; it imported fine music and great speakers for Memorial Day.

Presently the sad procession to the cemetery began once more. There was a long, cold winter, with many cases of pneumonia, and three veterans succumbed; there was an intensely hot summer, and twice in one month the post read its committal service and fired its salute. A few years more, and the post numbered but

three. Past them still on post evenings walked Adam, head in air, hands clasped behind his back. There was Edward Green, round, fat, who puffed and panted; there was Newton Towne, who walked, in spite of palsy, as though he had won the battle of Gettysburg; there was, last of all, Henry Foust, who at seventy-five was hale and strong. Usually a tall son walked beside him, or a grandchild clung to his hand. He was almost never alone; it was as though every one who knew him tried to have as much as possible of his company. Past him with a grave nod walked Adam. Adam was two years older than Henry; it required more and more stretching of arms behind his back to keep his shoulders straight.

In April Newton Towne was taken ill and died. Edward Green was terrified, though he considered himself, in spite of his shortness of breath, a strong man.

"Don't let anything happen to you, Henry," he would say. "Don't let anything get you, Henry. I can't march alone."

"I'll be there," Henry would reassure him. Only one look at Henry, and the most alarmed would have been comforted.

"It would kill me to march alone," said Edward Green.

As if Fosterville realized that it could not continue long to show its devotion to its veterans, it made this year special preparations for Memorial Day. The Fosterville Band practiced elaborate music, the children were drilled in marching. The children were to precede the veterans to the cemetery and were to scatter flowers

over the graves. Houses were gayly decorated, flags and banners floating in the pleasant spring breeze. Early in the morning carriages and wagons began to bring in the country folk.

Adam Foust realized as well as Fosterville that the parades of veterans were drawing to their close.

"This may be the last time I can show my principles," said he, with grim setting of his lips. "I will put on my gray coat early in the morning."

Though the two veterans were to march to the cemetery, carriages were provided to bring them home. Fosterville meant to be as careful as possible of its treasures.

"I don't need any carriage to ride in, like Ed Green," said Adam proudly. "I could march out and back. Perhaps Ed Green will have to ride out as well as back."

But Edward Green neither rode nor walked. The day turned suddenly warm, the heat and excitement accelerated his already rapid breathing, and the doctor forbade his setting foot to the ground.

"But I will!" cried Edward, in whom the spirit of war still lived.

"No," said the doctor.

"Then I will ride."

"You will stay in bed," said the doctor.

So without Edward Green the parade was formed. Before the court-house waited the band, and the long line of school-children, and the burgess, and the fire company, and the distinguished stranger who was to make the address, until Henry Foust appeared, in his

blue suit, with his flag on his breast and his bouquet in his hand. On each side of him walked a tall, middle-aged son, who seemed to hand him over reluctantly to the marshal, who was to escort him to his place. Smilingly he spoke to the marshal, but he was the only one who smiled or spoke. For an instant men and women broke off in the middle of their sentences, a husky something in their throats; children looked up at him with awe. Even his own grandchildren did not dare to wave or call from their places in the ranks. Then the storm of cheers broke.

Round the next corner Adam Foust waited. He was clad in his gray uniform—those who looked at him closely saw with astonishment that it was a new uniform; his brows met in a frown, his gray moustache seemed to bristle.

"How he hates them!" said one citizen of Fosterville to another. "Just look at poor Adam!"

"Used to bait his hook for him," Adam was saying. "Used to carry him pick-a-back! Used to go halves with him on everything. Now he walks with Ed Green!"

Adam pressed forward to the curb. The band was playing "Marching Through Georgia," which he hated; everybody was cheering. The volume of sound was deafening.

"Cheering Ed Green!" said Adam. "Fat! Lazy! Didn't have a wound. Dare say he hid behind a tree! Dare say——"

The band was in sight now, the back of the drum-major appeared, then all the musicians swung round

the corner. After them came the little children with their flowers and their shining faces.

"Him and Ed Green next," said old Adam.

But Henry walked alone. Adam's whole body jerked in his astonishment. He heard some one say that Edward Green was sick, that the doctor had forbidden him to march, or even to ride. As he pressed nearer the curb he heard the admiring comments of the crowd.

"Isn't he magnificent!"

"See his beautiful flowers! His grandchildren always send him his flowers."

"He's our first citizen."

"He's mine!" Adam wanted to cry out. "He's mine!"

Never had Adam felt so miserable, so jealous, so heartsick. His eyes were filled with the great figure. Henry was, in truth, magnificent, not only in himself, but in what he represented. He seemed symbolic of a great era of the past, and at the same time of a new age which was advancing. Old Adam understood all his glory.

"He's mine! said old Adam again, foolishly.

Then Adam leaned forward with startled, staring eyes. Henry had bowed and smiled in answer to the cheers. Across the street his own house was a mass of color—red, white, and blue over windows and doors, gay dresses on the porch. On each side the pavement was crowded with a shouting multitude. Surely no hero had ever had a more glorious passage through the streets of his birthplace!

But old Adam saw that Henry's face blanched, that there appeared suddenly upon it an expression of intolerable pain. For an instant Henry's step faltered and grew uncertain.

Then old Adam began to behave like a wild man. He pushed himself through the crowd, he flung himself upon the rope as though to tear it down, he called out, "Wait! wait!" Frightened women, fearful of some sinister purpose, tried to grasp and hold him. No man was immediately at hand, or Adam would have been seized and taken away. As for the feeble women—Adam shook them off and laughed at them.

"Let me go, you geese!" said he.

A mounted marshal saw him and rode down upon him; men started from under the ropes to pursue him. But Adam eluded them or outdistanced them. He strode across an open space with a surety which gave no hint of the terrible beating of his heart, until he reached the side of Henry. Him he greeted, breathlessly and with terrible eagerness.

"Henry," said he, gasping, "Henry, do you want me to walk along?"

Henry saw the alarmed crowds, he saw the marshal's hand stretched to seize Adam, he saw most clearly of all the tearful eyes under the beetling brows. Henry's voice shook, but he made himself clear.

"It's all right," said he to the marshal. "Let him be."

"I saw you were alone," said Adam. "I said, 'Henry needs me.' I know what it is to be alone. I——"

But Adam did not finish his sentence. He found a

hand on his, a blue arm linked tightly in his gray arm, he felt himself moved along amid thunderous roars of sound.

"Of course I need you!" said Henry. "I've needed you all along."

Then, old but young, their lives almost ended, but themselves immortal, united, to be divided no more, amid an ever-thickening sound of cheers, the two marched down the street.

—Elsie Singmaster.

III

THE WILDCAT

When Cassius Wyble came down from his mountains to the 2000-population metropolis of Clayburg on his half-yearly trip for supplies he thought the old custom of Muster Day had been revived.

No fewer than eleven men in khaki were lounging round the station platform or sitting on the steps of the North America general store. Enlistment posters, too, flared from windows and walls.

These posters—except for their pretty pictures—meant nothing at all to Cash Wyble. For, as with his parents and grandparents, his knowledge of the written or printed word was purely a matter of hearsay.

Yet the sight of the eleven men in newfangled uniform—so like in color to his own butternut homespuns—interested Cash.

"What's all the boys doin'—togged up thataway?" he demanded of the North America's proprietor. "Waitin' for the band?"

"Waiting to be shipped to Camp Lee," answered the local merchant prince; adding, as Cash's burnt-leather face grew blanker: "Camp Lee, down in V'ginia, you know. Training camp for the war."

"War?" queried Cash, preparing to grin, at prospect of a joke. "What war?"

"What war?" echoed the dumfounded storekeeper. "Why, *the* war, of course! Where in blazes have you been keeping yourself?"

"I been up home, where I b'long," said Cash sulkily. "What with the hawgs, an' crops an' skins an' sich, a busy man's got no time traipsin' off to the city every minute. Twice a year does me pretty nice. An' now s'pose you tell me what war you're blattin' about."

The storekeeper told him. He told him in the simplest possible language. Yet half—and more than half—of the explanation went miles above the listening mountaineer's head. Cash gathered, however, that the United States was fighting Germany.

Germany he knew by repute for a country or a town on the far side of the world. Some of its citizens had even invaded his West Virginia mountains, where their odd diction and porcelain pipes roused much derision among the cultured hillfolk.

"Germany?" mused Cash when the narrative was ended. "We're to war with Germany, hey? Sakes, but I wisht I'd knowed that yesterday! A couple of Germans went right past my shack. I could 'a' shot 'em as easy as toad pie."

The North America's proprietor valued Cash Wyble's sparse trade, as he valued that of other mountaineers who made Clayburg their semiannual port of call. If on Cash's report these rustics should begin a guerilla warfare upon their German neighbors, more of them would presently be lodged in jail than the North America could well afford to spare from its meager customer list.

Wherefore the proprietor did some more explaining. Knowing the mountaineer brain, he made no effort to point out the difference between armed Germans and noncombatants. He merely said that the Government had threatened to lock up any West Virginian who should kill a German—this side of Europe. It was a new law, he continued, and one that the revenue officers were bent on enforcing.

Cash sighed and reluctantly bade farewell to an alluring dream that had begun to shape itself in his simple brain—a dream of "laying out" in cliff-top brush, waiting with true elephant patience until a German neighbor should stroll, unsuspecting, along the trail below and should move slowly within range of the antique Wyble rifle.

It was a sweet fantasy, and hard to banish. For Cash certainly could shoot. There was scarce a man in the Cumberlands or the Appalachians who could outshoot him. Shooting and a native knack at moonshining were Cash's only real accomplishments. Whether stalking a shy old stag or potting a revenue officer on the sky line, the man's aim was uncannily true. In a region of born marksmen his skill stood forth supreme.

He felt not the remotest hatred for any of these local Germans. In an impersonal way he rather liked one or two of them. Yet, if the law had really been off——

The zest of the man hunt tingled pleasantly in the marksman's blood. And he resented this unfair new revenue ruling, which permitted and even encouraged

the killing of Germans in Europe and yet ordained a closed season on them in West Virginia. Still, there was no sense in a busy man's risking jail or a fine by indulging his sporting tastes. So Cash tried to forget the temptation, and proceeded to the more material task of trafficking for his next half year's supplies.

A few months later the draft caught Cash Wyble and carried him away in its swirling flood, depositing him in due time, with a quantity of similar mountaineer flotsam, in the training mill of Camp Lee.

No half-grown wildcat dragged by the scruff of the neck from the sanctuary of its tree hole was ever one-tenth so ragingly indignant as was Cash at his impressment into his country's service. Born and bred of fellow illiterates in the wildest corner of the Cumberland Range, thirty-two miles from the nearest railroad, he knew nothing and cared less about the affairs of the world that lay beyond the circling blue mountain walls.

To Cash all persons who lived outside that circle were "Foreigners," even if their habitat was the adjoining county of his own state.

He had heard of England and of France and of Europe, in much the same vague fashion as he had heard of Germany. He knew the name of the President of the United States; of the governor of West Virginia; of the mayor of Clayburg. Also of the political party whose ticket his father had always voted, and which Cash, in consequence, voted. He knew there had been a Civil War and—from pictures and from paternal description—he knew the types of uniforms each side

had worn. The foregoing facts comprised his total knowledge of American politics and of world history.

As to the causes and the occasion and the stakes of the present war he had not an inkling. Nor could the explanations of slightly better-informed recruits make the matter much clearer to him. It most certainly roused no trace of enthusiasm or of patriotism in his indignant breast. All he knew or was interested in was that he had been forced to leave his shack and his straggly mountain-side farm and his hidden moonshine still, at the very worst possible season for leaving any of them.

He had been coerced into riding innumerable miles to a foreigner state that seemed all bottomland, and there was herded with more men than he had known were on earth. He had been dressed in an amazing suit; made to wear socks and underclothes for the first time in his life; and daily put through a series of physical evolutions whose import was a sealed book to him. In all weathers, too, he must wear shoes.

Like the aforesaid caught wildcat Cash Wyble rebelled at every inch of the way. For his first two months of captivity he spent more time in the guardhouse than out of it. On his first day at camp he tried to thrash a lieutenant who was lining up a rawly shambling company and who spoke with unwelcomed sharpness to the mountaineer. Scarce had Cash atoned for this crime when he succeeded in giving a very creditable thrashing to a sergeant who was teaching his squad the mysteries of 'bout face.

Hearing that the near-by city of Petersburg was

larger than Clayburg—which he knew to be the biggest metropolis in America—Cash set out to nail the lie by a personal inspection of Petersburg. He neglected to apply for leave, so was held up by the first sentinel he met.

Cash explained very politely his reason for quitting camp. But the pig-headed sentinel still refused to let him pass. Two minutes later a fast-summoned corporal and two men were using all their strength to pry Wyble loose from the luckless sentry. And again the guardhouse had Cash as a transient and blasphemous guest.

He was learning much more of kitchen-police work than of guard mount. At the latter task he was a failure. The first night he was assigned to beat pacing, the relief found him restfully snoring, on his back, his rifle stuck up in front of him by means of its bayonet thrust into the ground. Cash had seen no good reason why he should walk to and fro for hours when there was nothing exciting to watch for and when he had been awake since early morning. Therefore he had gone to sleep. And his subsequent guardhouse stay filled him with uncomprehending fury.

The salute, too, struck him as the height of absurdity—as a bit of tomfoolery in which he would have no part. Not that he was exclusive, but what was the use of touching one's forelock to some officer one had never before met? He was willing to nod pleasantly and even to say "Howdy, Cap?" when his company captain passed by him for the first time in the morning. But he saw no use in repeating that or any other form

of salutation when the same captain chanced to meet him a bare fifteen minutes later.

Cash Wyble's case was not in any way unique among Camp Lee's thirty thousand new soldiers. Hundreds of mountaineers were in still worse mental plight. And the tact as well as the skill of their officers was strained well-nigh to the breaking point in shaping the amorphous backwoods rabble into trim soldiers.

Not all members of the mountain draft were so fiercely resentful as was Cash. But many others of them were like unbroken colts. The strange frequency of washing and of shaving, and the wearing of underclothes were their chief puzzles.

The company captain labored with Cash again and again, pointing out the need of neat cleanliness, of promptitude, of vigilance; trying to make him understand that a salute is not a sign of servility; seeking to imbue him with the spirit of patriotism and of discipline. But to Cash the whole thing was infinitely worse and more bewildering than had been the six months he had once spent in Clayburg jail for mayhem.

Three things alone mitigated his misery at Camp Lee: The first was the shooting; the second was his monthly pay—which represented more real money than he ever had had in his pocket at any one time; the third was the food—amazing in its abundance and luxurious variety, to the always-hungry mountaineer.

But presently the target shooting palled. As soon as he had mastered carefully the intricacies of the queer new rifle they gave him, the hours at the range were

no more inspiring to him than would be, to Paderewski, the eternal playing of the scale of C with one finger.

To Cash the target shooting was child's play. Once he grasped the rules as to sights and elevations and became used to the feel of the army rifle, the rest was drearily simple.

He could outshoot practically every man at Camp Lee. This gave him no pride. He made himself popular with men who complimented him on it by assuring them modestly that he outshot them not because he was such a dead shot but because they shot so badly.

The headiest colt in time will learn the lesson of the breaking pen. And Cash Wyble gradually became a soldier. At least he learned the drill and the regulations and how to keep out of the guardhouse—except just after pay day; and his lank figure took on a certain military spruceness. But under the surface he was still Cash Wyble. He behaved, because there was no incentive at the camp that made disobedience worth while.

Then after an endless winter came the journey to the seaboard and the embarkation for France; and the awesome sight of a tossing gray ocean a hundred times wider and rougher than Clayburg River in freshet time. Followed a week of agonized terror, mingled with an acute longing to die. Then ensued a week of calm water, during which one might refill the oft-emptied inner man.

A few days later Cash was bumping along a newly repaired French railway in a car whose announced capacity was forty men or eight horses. And thence to

billet in a half-wrecked village, where his regiment was drilled and redrilled in the things they had toiled so hard at Camp Lee to master, and in much that was novel to the men.

Cash next came to a halt in a network of trenches overlooking a stretch of country that had been tortured into hideousness—a region that looked like a Doré nightmare. It was a waste of hillocks and gullies and shell holes and blasted big trees and frayed copses and split bowlders and seared vegetation. When Cash heard it was called No Man's Land he was not surprised. He well understood why no man—not even an ignorant foreigner—cared to buy such a tract.

He was far more interested in hearing that a tangle of trenches, somewhat like his regiment's own, lay three miles northeastward, at the limit of No Man's Land, and that those trenches were infested with Germans.

Germans were the people Cash Wyble had come all the way to France to kill. And once more the thrill of the man hunt swept pleasantly through his blood. He had no desire to risk prison. So he had made very certain by repeated inquiry that this particular section of France was in Europe; and that no part of it was within the boundaries or the jurisdiction of the sovereign state of West Virginia. Here, therefore, the law was off on Germans, and he could not get into the slightest trouble with the hated revenue officers by shooting as many of the foe as he could go out and find.

Cash enjoyed the picture he conjured up—a picture of a whole bevy of Germans seated at ease in a trench, smoking porcelain pipes and conversing with one an-

other in comically broken English; of himself stealing toward them, and from the shelter of one of those hillock bowlders opening a mortal fire on the unsuspecting foreigners.

It was a quaint thought, and one that Cash loved to play with.

Also it had an advantage that most of Cash's vivid mind pictures had not. For, in part, it came true.

The Germans, on the thither side of No Man's Land, seemed bent on jarring the repose and wrenching the nerve of their lately arrived Yankee neighbors. Not only were those veteran official entertainers, Minnie and Bertha, and their equally vocal artillery sisters called into service for the purpose, but a dense swarm of snipers were also impressed into the task.

Now this especial reach of No Man's Land was a veritable snipers' paradise. There was cover—plenty of it—everywhere. A hundred sharpshooters of any scouting prowess at all could deploy at will amid the tumble of bowlders and knolls and twisted tree trunks and battered foliage and craters.

The long spell of wet weather had precluded the burning away of undergrowth. There were tree tops and hill summits whence a splendid shot could be taken at unwary Americans in the lower front-line trenches and along the rising ground at the rear of the Yankee lines. Yes, it was a stretch of ground laid out for the joy of snipers. And the German sharpshooters took due advantage of this bit of luck. The whine of a high-power bullet was certain to follow the momentary exposure of any portion of khaki anatomy above or

behind the parapets. And in disgustingly many instances the bullet did not whine in vain. All of which kept the newcomers from getting any excess joy out of trench life.

To mitigate the annoyance there was a call for volunteer sharpshooters to scout cautiously through No Man's Land and seek to render the boche sniping a less safe and exhilarating sport than thus far it had been. The job was full of peril, of course. For there was a more than even chance of the Yankee snipers' being sniped by the rival sharpshooters, who were better acquainted with the ground.

Yet at the first call there was a clamorous throng of volunteers. Many of these volunteers admitted under pressure that they knew nothing of scout work and that they had not so much as qualified in marksmanship. But they craved a chance at the boche. And grouchily did they resent the swift weeding-out process that left their services uncalled for.

Cash Wyble was the first man accepted for the dangerous detail. And for the first time since the draft had caught him his burnt-leather face expanded into a grin that could not have been wider unless his flaring ears had been set back.

With two days' rations and a goodly store of cartridges he fared forth that night into No Man's Land. Dawn was not yet fully gray when the first crack of his rifle was wafted back to the trenches.

Then the artillery firing, which was part of the day's work, set in. And its racket drowned the noise of any shooting that Cash might be at.

Forty-eight hours passed. At dawn of the third day Cash came back to camp. He was tired and horribly thirsty; but his lantern-jawed visage was one unmarred mask of bliss.

"Twelve," he reported tersely to his captain. "At least," he continued in greater detail, "twelve that I'm dead sure of. Nice big ones, too, some of 'em."

"Nice big ones!" repeated the captain in admiring disgust. "You talk as if you'd been after wild turkeys!"

"A heap better'n wild-turkey shootin'!" grinned Cash. "An' I got twelve that I'm sure of. There was one, though, I couldn't get. A he-one, at that. He's sure some German, that feller! He's as crafty as they make 'em. I couldn't ever come up to him or get a line on him. I'll bet I throwed away thutty ca'tridges on jes' that one Dutchy. An' by an' by he found out what I was arter. Then there was fun, Cap! Him and I did have one fine shootin' match! But I was as good at hidin' as he was. And there couldn't neither one of us seem to git 'tother. Most of the rest of 'em was as easy to git as a settin' hen. But not him. I'd 'a' laid out there longer for a crack at him but I couldn't find no water. If there'd been a spring or a water seep anywheres there I'd 'a' stayed till doomsday but what I'd 'a' got him. Soon's I fill up with some water I'm goin' back arter him. He's well wuth it. I'll bet that cuss don't weigh an ounce under two hundred pound."

Cash's smug joy in his exploit and his keen anticipation of a return trip were dashed by the captain's reminder that war is not a hunting jaunt; and that Wyble

must return to his loathed trench duties until such time as it should seem wise to those above him to send him forth again.

Cash could not make head or tail out of such a command. After months of grinding routine he had at last found a form of recreation that not only dulled his sharply constant homesickness but that made up for all he had gone through. And now he was told he could go forth on such delightful excursions only when he might chance to be sent!

Red wrath boiled hot in the soul of Cash Wyble. Experience had taught him the costly folly of venting such rage on a commissioned officer. So he hunted up Top Sergeant Mahan of his own company and laid his griefs before that patient veteran.

Top Sergeant Mahan—formerly of the Regular Army—listened with true sympathy to the complaint; and listened with open enthusiasm to the tale of the two days of forest skulking. But he could offer no help in the matter of returning to the *battue*.

"The cap'n was right," declared Mahan. "They wanted to throw a little lesson into those boche snipers and make them ease up on their heckling. And you gave them a man's-size dose of their own physic. There's not one sniper out there to-day, to ten who were on deck three days ago. You've done your job. And you've done it good and plenty. But it's done—for a while anyhow. You weren't brought over here to spend your time in prowling around No Man's Land on a still hunt for stray Germans. That isn't Uncle Sam's way. Don't go grouching over it, man! You'll

be remembered, all right. And if they get pesky again you'll be the first one sent out to abate them. You can count on it. Till then, go ahead with your regular work and forget the sniper job."

"But, Sarge!" pleaded Cash, "you don't git the idee. You don't git it at all. Those Germans will be shyer'n scat, now that I've flushed 'em. An' the longer the news has a chance to git round among 'em, the shyer they're due to git. Why, even if I was to go out thar straight off it ain't likely I'd be able to pot one where I potted three before. It's the same diff'rence as it is between the first flushin' of a wild-turkey bunch an' the second. An' if I've got to wait long there'll be no downin' *any* of 'em. Tell that to the Cap. Make him see if he wants them cusses he better let me git 'em while they're still gittable."

In vain did Top Sergeant Mahan go over and over the same ground, trying to make Cash see that the company captain and those above him were not out for a record in the matter of ambushed Germans.

Wyble had struck one idea he could understand, and he would not give it up.

"But, Sarge," he urged desperately, "I'm no durn good here foolin' around with drill an' relief an' diggin' an' all that. Any mudback can do them things if you folks is sot on havin' 'em done. But there ain't another man in all this outfit who can shoot like I can; or has the knack of 'layin' out'; or of stalkin'. Pop got the trick of it from gran'ther. An' gran'ther got if off th' Injuns in th' old days. If you folks is out to git Germans I'm the feller to git 'em fer you. Nice big ones.

If you're here jes' to play sojer, any poor fool c'n play it fer you as good as me."

"I've just told you," began the sergeant, "that we ——"

"'Nuther thing!" suggested Cash brightly. "These Germans must have villages somewe'res. All folks do. Even Injuns. Some place where they live when they ain't on the warpath. Get leave an' rations an' ca'tridges for me—for a week, or maybe two—an' I'll gar'ntee to scout till I find one of them villages. The Dutchies won't be expectin' me. An' I c'n likely pot a whole mess of 'em before they c'n git to cover.

"Say!" he went on eagerly, a bit of general information flashing into his memory. "Did you know Germans was a kind of Confed'? The fightin' Germans, I mean. Well, they are. The hull twelve I got was dressed in gray Confed' uniform, same as pop used to wear. I got his old uniform to home. Lord, but pop would sure lay into me if he knowed I was pepperin' his old side partners like that! I'd figered that all Germans was dressed like the ones back home. But they've got reg'lar uniforms. Confed' uniforms, at that. I wonder does our gin'ral know about it?"

Again the long-suffering Mahan tried to set him right; this time as to the wide divergence between the gray-backed troops of Ludendorff and the Confederacy's gallant soldiers. But Cash merely nodded cryptically, as always he did when he thought his foreigner fellow soldiers were trying to take advantage of his supposed ignorance. And he swung back to the theme nearest his heart.

"Now about that snipin' business," he pursued, "even if the Cap don't want too many of 'em shot up, he sure won't be so cantankerous as to keep me from tryin' to git that thirteenth feller! I mean the one that kep' blazin' at me whiles I kep' blazin' at him; an' the both of us too cute to show an inch of target to t'other or stay in the same patch of cover after we'd fired. That Dutchy sure c'n scout grand! He's a born woodsman. An' you-all don't want it to be said the Germans has got a better sniper than what we've got, do you? Well, that's jes' what will be said by everyone in this yer county unless you let me down him. Come on, Sarge! Let me go back arter him! I been thinkin' up a trick gran'ther got off'n th' Injuns. It oughter land him sure. Let me go try! I b'lieve that feller can't weigh an ounce less'n two-twenty. Leave me have one more go arter him; and I'll bring him in to prove it!"

Top Sergeant Mahan's patience stopped fraying, and ripped from end to end.

"You seem to think this war is a cross between a mountain feud and a deer hunt!" he growled. "Isn't there any way of hammering through your ivory mine that we aren't here to pick off unsuspecting Germans and make a tally of the kill? And we aren't here to brag about the size of the men we shoot either. We're here, you and I, to obey orders and do our work. You'll get plenty of shooting before you go home again, don't worry. Only you'll do it the way you're told to. After all the time you've spent in the hoosgow since you joined, I should think you'd know that."

But Cash Wyble did not know it. He said so—loudly, offensively, blasphemously. He said many things—things that in any other army than his own would have landed him against a blank wall facing a firing squad. Then he slouched off by himself to grumble.

As far as Cash Wyble was concerned the war was a failure—a total failure. The one bright spot in its workaday monotony was blurred for him by the orders of his stupid superiors. In his vivid imagination that elusive German sniper gradually attained a weight not far from three hundred pounds.

In sour silence Cash sulked through the rest of the day's routine. In his heart boiled black rebellion. He had learned his soldier trade, back at Camp Lee, because it had been very strongly impressed upon him that he would go to jail if he did not. For the same reason he had not tried to desert. He had all the true mountaineer horror for prison. He had toned down his native temper and stubbornness because failure to do so always landed him in the guardhouse—a place that, to his mind, was almost as terrible as jail.

But out here in the wilderness there were no jails. At least Cash had seen none. And he had it on the authority of Top Sergeant Mahan himself that this part of France was not within the legal jurisdiction of West Virginia—the only region, as far as Cash actually knew, where men are put in prison for their misdeeds. Hence the rules governing Camp Lee could not be supposed to obtain out here. All of which comforted Cash not a little.

To him "patriotism" was a word as meaningless as was "discipline." The law of force he recognized—the law that had hog-tied him and flung him into the Army. But the higher law which makes men risk their all, right blithely, that their country and civilization may triumph—this was as much a mystery to Cash Wyble as to any army mule.

Just now he detested the country that had dragged him away from his lean shack and forbade him to disport himself as he chose in No Man's Land. He hated his country; he hated his Army; he hated his regiment. Most of all he loathed his captain and Top Sergeant Mahan.

At Camp Lee he had learned to comport himself more or less like a civilized recruit because there was no breach of discipline worth the penalty of the guardhouse. Out here it was different.

That night Private Cassius Wyble got hold of two other men's emergency rations, a bountiful supply of water and a stuffing pocketful of cartridges. With these and his adored rifle he eluded the sentries—a ridiculously easy feat for so skilled a woodsman—and went over the top and on into No Man's Land.

By daylight he had trailed and potted a German sniper.

By sunrise he had located the man against whom he had sworn his strategy feud—the German who had put him on his mettle two days before.

Cash did not see his foe. And when from the edge of a rock he fired at a puff of smoke in a clump of trees no resultant body came tumbling earthward. And

thirty seconds later a bullet from quite another part of the clump spatted hotly against the rock edge five inches from his head.

Cash smiled beatifically. He recognized the tactics of his former opponent. And once more the merry game was on.

To make perfectly certain of his rival's identity Cash wiggled low in the undergrowth until he came to a jut of rock about seven feet long and two feet high. Lying at full length behind this low barrier, and parallel to it, Cash put his hat on the toe of his boot and cautiously lifted his foot until the hat's sugar-loaf crown protruded a few inches above the top of the rock.

On the instant, from the tree clump, snapped the report of a rifle. The bullet, ignoring the hat, nicked the rock comb precisely above Cash's upturned face. He nodded approval, for it told him that his enemy was not only a good forest fighter but that he recognized the same skill in Wyble.

Thus began two days of delightful pastime for the exiled mountaineer. Thus, too, began a series of offensive and defensive maneuvers worthy of Natty Bumppo and Old Sleuth combined.

It was not until Cash abandoned the hunt long enough to find and shoot another German sniper and appropriate the latter's uniform that he was able, under cover of dusk, to get near enough to the tree clump for a fair sight of his antagonist. At which juncture a snap shot from the hip ended the duel.

Cash's initial thrill of triumph, even then, was dampened. For the sniper—to whom by this time he had

credited the size of Goliath at the very least—proved to be a wizened little fellow, not much more than five feet tall.

Still Cash had won. He had outgeneraled a mighty clever sharpshooter. He had gotten what he came out for, and two other snipers, besides. It was not a bad bag. As there was nothing else to stay there for, and as his water was gone, as well as nearly all his cartridges, Cash shouldered his rifle and plodded wearily back to camp for a night's rest.

There to his amazed indignation he was not received as a hero, even when he sought to recount his successful adventures. Instead, he was arrested at once on a charge of technical desertion, and was lodged in the local substitute for a regular guardhouse.

Bewildered wrath smothered him. What had he done, to be arrested again? True, he had left camp without leave. But had he not atoned for this peccadillo fifty-fold by the results of his absence? Had he not killed three men whose business it was to shoot Americans? Had he not killed the very best sniper the Germans could hope to possess?

Yet, they had not promoted him. They had not so much as thanked him. Instead, they had stuck him here in the hoosgow. And Mahan had said something about a court-martial.

It was black ingratitude! That was what it was. That and more. Such people did not deserve to have the services of a real fighter like himself.

Which started another train of thought.

Apparently—except on special occasions—the Amer-

icans did not send men out into the wilderness to take pot shots at the lurking foe. And apparently that was just what the Germans always did. He had full proof, indeed, of the German custom. For had he not found a number of the graybacks thus happily engaged? Not for one occasion only, but as a regular thing?

Yes, the Germans had sense enough to appreciate a good fighter when they had one. And they knew how to make use of him in a way to afford innocent pleasure to himself and much harm to the enemy. That was the ideal life for a soldier—"laying out" and sniping the foe. Not kitchen-police work and endless drill and digging holes and taking baths. Sniping was the job for a he-man, if one had to be away from home at all. And in the German ranks alone was such happy employment to be found.

When Cash calmly and definitely made up his mind to desert to the Germans he was troubled by no scruples at all. Even the dread of the mysterious court-martial added little weight to his decision. The deed seemed to him not a whit worse than was the leaving of one farmer's employ, back home, to take service with another who offered more congenial work.

Wherefore he deserted.

It was not at all difficult for him to escape from the elementary cell in which he was confined. It was a mere matter of strategy and luck. So was his escape to No Man's Land.

Unteroffizier Otto Schrabstaetter an hour later conducted to his company commander a lanky and leather-faced man in khaki uniform who had accosted a sentry

with the pacific plea that he be sworn in as a member of the German Army.

The sentry did not know English; nor did Unteroffizier Otto Schrabstaetter. And though Cash addressed them both in a very fair imitation of the guttural English he had heard used by the West Virginia Germans—and which he fondly believed to be pure German—they did not understand a word of his plea. So he was taken to the captain, a man who had lived for five years in New York.

With the Unteroffizier at his side and with two armed soldiers just behind him Cash confronted the captain, and under the latter's volley of barked questions told his story. Ten minutes afterward he was repeating the same tale to a flint-faced man with a fox-brush mustache—Colonel von Scheurer, commander of the regiment that held that section of the first-line trench.

A little to Cash's aggrieved surprise, neither the captain nor the colonel seemed interested in his prowess as a sharpshooter or in his ill-treatment at the hands of his own Army. Instead, they asked an interminable series of questions that seemed to have no bearing at all on his case.

They wanted, for instance, to know the name of his regiment; its quota of men; how long they had been in France; what sea route they had taken in crossing the ocean; from what port they had sailed; and the approximate size of the convoy. They wanted to know what regiments lay to either side of Cash's in the American trenches; how many men per month America was sending overseas and where they usually

landed. They wanted to know a thousand things more, of the same general nature.

Cash saw no reason why he should not satisfy their silly curiosity. And he proceeded to do so to the best of his ability. But as he did not know so much as the name of the port whence he had shipped to France, and as the rest of his tactical knowledge was on the same plane, the fast-barked queries presently took on a tone of exasperation.

This did not bother Cash. He was doing his best. If these people did not like his answers that was no affair of his. He was here to fight, not to talk. His attention wandered.

Presently he interrupted the colonel's most searching questions to ask: "You-all don't happen to be the Kaiser, do you? I s'pose not though. I'll bet that old Kaiser must weigh ——"

A thundered oath brought him back to the subject in hand, and the cross-questioning went on. But all the queries elicited nothing more than a mass of misinformation, delivered with such palpable genuineness of purpose that even Colonel von Scheurer could not doubt the man's good faith.

And at last the two officers began to have a very fair estimate of the mountaineer's character and of the reasons that had brought him thither.

Still it was the colonel's mission in life to suspect—to take nothing for granted. And after all, this yokel and his queer story were no more bizarre than was many a spy trick played by Germany upon her foes. Spies were bound to be good actors. And this lantern-

jawed fellow might possibly be a character actor of high ability. Colonel von Scheurer sat for a moment in silence, peering up at Cash from beneath a thatch of stiff-haired brows. Then he ordered the captain and the others to leave the dugout.

Alone with Wyble the colonel still maintained his pose of majestic surveillance.

Then with no warning he spat forth the question: "*Wer bist du?*"

Not the best character actor unhung could have simulated the owlish ignorance in Cash's face. Not the shrewdest spy could have had time to mask a knowledge of German. And, as Colonel von Scheurer well knew, no spy who did not understand German would have been sent to enlist in the German Army.

The colonel at once was satisfied that the newcomer was not a spy. Yet to make doubly certain of the recruit's willingness to serve against his own country Von Scheurer sought another test. Pulling toward him a scratch pad he picked up a pencil from the table before him and proceeded to make a rapid sketch. When the sketch was complete he detached the top sheet and showed it to Cash. On it was drawn a rough likeness of the American flag.

"What is that?" he demanded.

"Old Glory," answered Cash after a leisurely survey of the picture; adding in friendly patronage: "And not bad drawed, at that."

"It is the United States flag," pursued the colonel, "as you say. It is the national emblem of the country

where you were born; the country you are renouncing, to become a subject of the All Highest."

"Meanin' Gawd?" asked Cash.

He wanted to be sure of every step. While he did not at all know the meaning of "renounce," yet his attendance at mountain camp-meeting revivals had given him a possible inkling as to what "All Highest" meant.

"What?" inquired the puzzled colonel, not catching his drift.

"The 'All Highest' is Gawd, ain't it?" said Cash.

"It is His Imperial Majesty, the Kaiser," sharply retorted the scandalized colonel.

"Oh!" exclaimed Cash, much interested. "I see. In Wes' V'ginny we call Him 'Gawd.' An' over in this neck of the woods your Dutch name for Him is 'Kaiser.' What a ninny I am! I'd allers had the idee the Kaiser was jes' a man, with somethin' the same sort of job as Pres'dent Wilson's. But——"

"This picture represents the flag of the United States," resumed the impatient Von Scheurer, waiving the subject of theology for the point in hand. "You have renounced it. You have declared your wish to fight against it. Prove that. Prove it by tearing that sketch in two—and spitting upon it!"

"Hold on!" interposed Cash, speaking with tolerant kindness as to a somewhat stupid child. "Hold on, Cap! You got me wrong. Or may be I didn't make it so very clear. I didn't ever say I wanted to fight Old Glory. All I said I wanted to do was to fight that crowd of smart Alecks over yonder who jail me all the

time an' won't let me fight in my own way. I've got nothin' agin th' old flag. Why, that 'ere's the flag I was borned under! Me an' pop an' gran'ther an' the hull b'ilin' of us—as fur back as there was any 'Merica, I reckon. I don't go 'round wavin' it none. That ain't my way. But I sure ain't goin' to tear it up. And I most gawdamightysure ain't goin' to spit on it. I ——"

He checked himself. Not that he had no more to say, but because to his astonishment he found he was beginning to lose his temper. This phenomenon halted his speech and turned his wondering thoughts inward.

Cash could not understand his own strange surge of choler. He had not been aware of any special interest in the American flag. A little bunting representation of the Stars and Stripes—now faded close to whiteness—hung on the wall of his shack at home, where his grandmother, a rabid Unionist, had hung it nearly sixty years earlier, when West Virginia had refused to join the Confederacy. Every day of his life Cash had seen it there; had seen without noting or caring.

Camp Lee, too, had been ablaze with American flags. And after he had learned the rules as to the flag salute Cash had never given the banners a second thought. The regimental flags, too, here in France, had seemed to him but a natural part of the Army's equipment, and no more to be venerated than the twin bars on his captain's tunic.

Thus he could not in the very least account for the fiery flare of rebellion that gripped him at this ramrod-like Prussian's command to defile the emblem. Yet

grip him it did. And it held him there, quivering and purple, the strange emotion waxing more and more overpoweringly potent at each passing fraction of a second. Dumb and shaking he glowered down at the amused colonel.

Von Scheurer watched him placidly for a few moments; then with a short laugh he advanced the test. Reaching for the sheet of paper whereon he had sketched the flag the colonel held it lightly between the fingers of his outstretched hands.

"It is really a very simple thing to do," he said carelessly, yet keeping a covert watch upon the mountaineer. "And it is a thing that every loyal German subject should rejoice to do. All I required was that you first tear the emblem in two and then spit upon it—as I do now."

But the colonel did not suit action to words. As his fingers tightened on the sheet of paper the dugout echoed to a low snarl that would have done credit to a Cumberland catamount.

And with the snarl six feet of lean and wiry bulk shot through the air across the narrow table that separated Cash from the colonel.

Von Scheurer with admirable presence of mind snatched his pistol from its temporary resting place in his lap. With the speed of the wind he seized the weapon. But with the speed of the whirlwind Cash Wyble was upon him, his clawlike fingers deep in the colonel's full throat, his hundred and sixty pounds of bone and gristle smiting Von Scheurer on chest and shoulder.

Cash had literally risen in air and pounced on the Prussian. Under the impact Von Scheurer's chair collapsed. Both men shot to earth, the colonel undermost and the pistol flying unheeded from his grasp. Over, too, went the table, and the electric light upon it. And the dugout was in pitch blackness.

There in the dark Cash Wyble deliriously tackled his prey, making queer and hideous little worrying sounds now and then far down in his throat, like a dog that mangles its meat.

And there the sentry from the earthen passageway found them when he rushed in with an electric torch, and followed by a rabble of fellow soldiers.

Cash at sound of the running footsteps jumped to his feet. The man he had attacked was lying very still, in a crumpled and yet sprawling heap—in a posture never designed by Nature.

With one wild sweep of his windmill arms Cash grabbed up the sheet of paper on which Von Scheurer had made his life's last sketch. With a simultaneous sweep he knocked the glass-bulbed torch from the sentinel, just as a rifle or two were centering their aim toward him; and, head down, he tore into the group of men who blocked the dugout entrance.

Cash had a faintly conscious sense of dashing down one passageway and up another, following by forestry instinct the course he noted when he was led into the colonel's presence.

He collided with a sentinel; he butted another from his flying path. He heard yells and shots—especially shots. Once something hit him on the shoulder, whirl-

ing him half round without breaking his stride. Again something hot whipped him across the cheek. And at last he was out, under the foggy stars, with excited Germans firing in his general direction and loosing off star shells.

Again instinct and scout skill came to the rescue as he plunged into a bramble thicket and wriggled through long grass on his heaving stomach.

An hour before dawn Cash Wyble was led before his sleepy and unloving company commander. The returned wanderer was caked with dirt and blood. His face was scored by briers. Across one cheek ran the red wale of a bullet. A very creditable flesh wound adorned his left shoulder. His clothes were in ribbons.

Before the captain could frame the first of a thousand scathing words Cash broke out pantingly: "Stick me in the hoosgow if you're a mind to, Cap! Stick me there for life. Or wish me onto a kitchen-police job forever! I'm not kickin'. It's comin' to me, all right, arter what I done.

"I git the drift of the hull thing now. I'm onter what it means. It—it means Old Glory! It means—*this!*"

He stuck out one muddy hand wherein was clutched a wad of scratch-pad paper.

Then the company commander did a thing that stamped him as a genius. Instead of administering the planned rebuke and following it by sending the wretch to the guard house he began to ask questions.

"What do you make of it all?" dazedly queried the captain of Top Sergeant Mahan when Cash had been

taken to the trench hospital to have his shoulder dressed.

"Well, sir," reported Mahan meditatively, "for one thing, I take it, we've got a new soldier in the company. A soldier, not a varmint. For another thing, I take it, Uncle Sam's got a new American on his list of nephews. And—and, unless I'm wrong, Kaiser Bill is short one crackajack sniper and one perfectly good Prussian colonel too. War's a funny thing, sir."

—Albert Payson Terhune.

IV

THE CITIZEN

THE President of the United States was speaking. His audience comprised two thousand foreign-born men who had just been admitted to citizenship. They listened intently, their faces, aglow with the light of a new-born patriotism, upturned to the calm, intellectual face of the first citizen of the country they now claimed as their own.

Here and there among the newly made citizens were wives and children. The women were proud of their men. They looked at them from time to time, their faces showing pride and awe.

One little woman, sitting immediately in front of the President, held the hand of a big, muscular man and stroked it softly. The big man was looking at the speaker with great blue eyes that were the eyes of a dreamer.

The President's words came clear and distinct:

You were drawn across the ocean by some beckoning finger of hope, by some belief, by some vision of a new kind of justice, by some expectation of a better kind of life. You dreamed dreams of this country, and I hope you brought the dreams with you. A man enriches the country to which he brings dreams, and you who have brought them have enriched America.

The big man made a curious choking noise and his wife breathed a soft "Hush!" The giant was strangely affected.

The President continued:

No doubt you have been disappointed in some of us, but remember this, if we have grown at all poor in the ideal, you brought some of it with you. A man does not go out to seek the thing that is not in him. A man does not hope for the thing that he does not believe in, and if some of us have forgotten what America believed in, you at any rate imported in your own hearts a renewal of the belief. Each of you, I am sure, brought a dream, a glorious, shining dream, a dream worth more than gold or silver, and that is the reason that I, for one, make you welcome.

The big man's eyes were fixed. His wife shook him gently, but he did not heed her. He was looking through the presidential rostrum, through the big buildings behind it, looking out over leagues of space to a snow-swept village that huddled on an island in the Beresina, the swift-flowing tributary of the mighty Dnieper, an island that looked like a black bone stuck tight in the maw of the stream.

It was in the little village on the Beresina that the Dream came to Ivan Berloff, Big Ivan of the Bridge.

The Dream came in the spring. All great dreams come in the spring, and the Spring Maiden who brought Big Ivan's Dream was more than ordinarily beautiful. She swept up the Beresina, trailing wondrous draperies of vivid green. Her feet touched the snow-hardened ground and armies of little white and blue

flowers sprang up in her footsteps. Soft breezes escorted her, velvety breezes that carried the aromas of the far-off places from which they came, places far to the southward, and more distant towns beyond the Black Sea whose people were not under the sway of the Great Czar.

The father of Big Ivan, who had fought under Prince Menshikov at Alma fifty-five years before, hobbled out to see the sunbeams eat up the snow hummocks that hid in the shady places, and he told his son it was the most wonderful spring he had ever seen.

"The little breezes are hot and sweet," he said, sniffing hungrily with his face turned toward the south. "I know them, Ivan! I know them! They have the spice odor that I sniffed on the winds that came to us when we lay in the trenches at Balaklava. Praise God for the warmth!"

And that day the Dream came to Big Ivan as he plowed. It was a wonder dream. It sprang into his brain as he walked behind the plow, and for a few minutes he quivered as the big bridge quivers when the Beresina sends her ice squadrons to hammer the arches. It made his heart pound mightily, and his lips and throat became very dry.

Big Ivan stopped at the end of the furrow and tried to discover what had brought the Dream. Where had it come from? Why had it clutched him so suddenly? Was he the only man in the village to whom it had come?

Like his father, he sniffed the sweet-smelling breezes.

He thrust his great hands into the sunbeams. He reached down and plucked one of a bunch of white flowers that had sprung up overnight. The Dream was born of the breezes and the sunshine and the spring flowers. It came from them and it had sprung into his mind because he was young and strong. He knew! It couldn't come to his father or Donkov, the tailor, or Poborino, the smith. They were old and weak, and Ivan's dream was one that called for youth and strength.

"Ay, for youth and strength," he muttered as he gripped the plow. "And I have it!"

That evening Big Ivan of the Bridge spoke to his wife, Anna, a little woman, who had a sweet face and a wealth of fair hair.

"Wife, we are going away from here," he said.

"Where are we going, Ivan?" she asked.

"Where do you think, Anna?" he said, looking down at her as she stood by his side.

"To Bobruisk," she murmured.

"No."

"Farther?"

"Ay, a long way farther."

Fear sprang into her soft eyes. Bobruisk was eighty-nine versts away, yet Ivan said they were going farther.

"We—we are not going to Minsk?" she cried.

"Ay, and beyond Minsk!"

"Ivan, tell me!" she gasped. "Tell me where we are going!"

"We are going to America."

"*To America?*"

"Yes, to America!"

Big Ivan of the Bridge lifted up his voice when he cried out the words "To America," and then a sudden fear sprang upon him as those words dashed through the little window out into the darkness of the village street. Was he mad? America was 8,000 versts away! It was far across the ocean, a place that was only a name to him, a place where he knew no one. He wondered in the strange little silence that followed his words if the crippled son of Poborino, the smith, had heard him. The cripple would jeer at him if the night wind had carried the words to his ear.

Anna remained staring at her big husband for a few minutes, then she sat down quietly at his side. There was a strange look in his big blue eyes, the look of a man to whom has come a vision, the look which came into the eyes of those shepherds of Judea long, long ago.

"What is it, Ivan?" she murmured softly, patting his big hand. "Tell me."

And Big Ivan of the Bridge, slow of tongue, told of the Dream. To no one else would he have told it. Anna understood. She had a way of patting his hands and saying soft things when his tongue could not find words to express his thoughts.

Ivan told how the Dream had come to him as he plowed. He told her how it had sprung upon him, a wonderful dream born of the soft breezes, of the sunshine, of the sweet smell of the upturned sod and of his own strength. "It wouldn't come to weak men," he said, baring an arm that showed great snaky mus-

cles rippling beneath the clear skin. "It is a dream that comes only to those who are strong and those who want—who want something that they haven't got." Then in a lower voice he said: "What is it that we want, Anna?"

The little wife looked out into the darkness with fear-filled eyes. There were spies even there in that little village on the Beresina, and it was dangerous to say words that might be construed into a reflection on the Government. But she answered Ivan. She stooped and whispered one word into his ear, and he slapped his thigh with his big hand.

"Ay," he cried. "That is what we want! You and I and millions like us want it, and over there, Anna, over there we will get it. It is the country where a muzhik is as good as a prince of the blood!"

Anna stood up, took a small earthenware jar from a side shelf, dusted it carefully and placed it upon the mantel. From a knotted cloth about her neck she took a ruble and dropped the coin into the jar. Big Ivan looked at her curiously.

"It is to make legs for your Dream," she explained. "It is many versts to America, and one rides on rubles."

"You are a good wife," he said. "I was afraid that you might laugh at me."

"It is a great dream," she murmured. "Come, we will go to sleep."

The Dream maddened Ivan during the days that followed. It pounded within his brain as he followed the plow. It bred a discontent that made him hate the little village, the swift-flowing Beresina and the

gray stretches that ran toward Mogilev. He wanted to be moving, but Anna had said that one rode on rubles, and rubles were hard to find.

And in some mysterious way the village became aware of the secret. Donkov, the tailor, discovered it. Donkov lived in one-half of the cottage occupied by Ivan and Anna, and Donkov had long ears. The tailor spread the news, and Poborino, the smith, and Yanansk, the baker, would jeer at Ivan as he passed.

"When are you going to America?" they would ask.

"Soon," Ivan would answer.

"Take us with you!" they would cry in chorus.

"It is no place for cowards," Ivan would answer. "It is a long way, and only brave men can make the journey."

"Are you brave?" the baker screamed one day as he went by.

"I am brave enough to want liberty!" cried Ivan angrily. "I am brave enough to want——"

"Be careful! Be careful!" interrupted the smith. "A long tongue has given many a man a train journey that he never expected."

That night Ivan and Anna counted the rubles in the earthenware pot. The giant looked down at his wife with a gloomy face, but she smiled and patted his hand.

"It is slow work," he said.

"We must be patient," she answered. "You have the Dream."

"Ay," he said. "I have the Dream."

Through the hot, languorous summertime the Dream grew within the brain of Big Ivan. He saw

visions in the smoky haze that hung above the Beresina. At times he would stand, hoe in hand, and look toward the west, the wonderful west into which the sun slipped down each evening like a coin dropped from the fingers of the dying day.

Autumn came, and the fretful whining winds that came down from the north chilled the Dream. The winds whispered of the coming of the Snow King, and the river grumbled as it listened. Big Ivan kept out of the way of Poborino, the smith, and Yanansk, the baker. The Dream was still with him, but autumn is a bad time for dreams.

Winter came, and the Dream weakened. It was only the earthenware pot that kept it alive, the pot into which the industrious Anna put every coin that could be spared. Often Big Ivan would stare at the pot as he sat beside the stove. The pot was the cord which kept the Dream alive.

"You are a good woman, Anna," Ivan would say again and again. "It was you who thought of saving the rubles."

"But it was you who dreamed," she would answer. "Wait for the spring, husband mine. Wait."

It was strange how the spring came to the Beresina that year. It sprang upon the flanks of winter before the Ice King had given the order to retreat into the fastnesses of the north. It swept up the river escorted by a million little breezes, and housewives opened their windows and peered out with surprise upon their faces. A wonderful guest had come to them and found them unprepared.

Big Ivan of the Bridge was fixing a fence in the meadow on the morning the Spring Maiden reached the village. For a little while he was not aware of her arrival. His mind was upon his work, but suddenly he discovered that he was hot, and he took off his overcoat. He turned to hang the coat upon a bush, then he sniffed the air, and a puzzled look came upon his face. He sniffed again, hurriedly, hungrily. He drew in great breaths of it, and his eyes shone with a strange light. It was wonderful air. It brought life to the Dream. It rose up within him, ten times more lusty than on the day it was born, and his limbs trembled as he drew in the hot, scented breezes that breed the *Wanderlust* and shorten the long trails of the world.

Big Ivan clutched his coat and ran to the little cottage. He burst through the door, startling Anna, who was busy with her housework.

"The Spring!" he cried. "*The Spring!*"

He took her arm and dragged her to the door. Standing together they sniffed the sweet breezes. In silence they listened to the song of the river. The Beresina had changed from a whining, fretful tune into a lilting, sweet song that would set the legs of lovers dancing. Anna pointed to a green bud on a bush beside the door.

"It came this minute," she murmured.

"Yes," said Ivan. "The little fairies brought it there to show us that spring has come to stay."

Together they turned and walked to the mantel. Big Ivan took up the earthenware pot, carried it to the

table, and spilled its contents upon the well-scrubbed boards. He counted while Anna stood beside him, her fingers clutching his coarse blouse. It was a slow business, because Ivan's big blunt fingers were not used to such work, but it was over at last. He stacked the coins into neat piles, then he straightened himself and turned to the woman at his side.

"It is enough," he said quietly. "We will go at once. If it was not enough, we would have to go because the Dream is upon me and I hate this place."

"As you say," murmured Anna. "The wife of Littin, the butcher, will buy our chairs and our bed. I spoke to her yesterday."

Poborino, the smith; his crippled son; Yanansk, the baker; Dankov, the tailor, and a score of others were out upon the village street on the morning that Big Ivan and Anna set out. They were inclined to jeer at Ivan, but something upon the face of the giant made them afraid. Hand in hand the big man and his wife walked down the street, their faces turned toward Bobruisk, Ivan balancing upon his head a heavy trunk that no other man in the village could have lifted.

At the end of the street a stripling with bright eyes and yellow curls clutched the hand of Ivan and looked into his face.

"I know what is sending you," he cried.

"Ay, *you* know," said Ivan, looking into the eyes of the other.

"It came to me yesterday," murmured the stripling. "I got it from the breezes. They are free, so are the

birds and the little clouds and the river. I wish I could go."

"Keep your dream," said Ivan softly. "Nurse it, for it is the dream of a man."

Anna, who was crying softly, touched the blouse of the boy. "At the back of our cottage, near the bush that bears the red berries, a pot is buried," she said. "Dig it up and take it home with you and when you have a kopeck drop it in. It is a good pot."

The stripling understood. He stooped and kissed the hand of Anna, and Big Ivan patted him upon the back. They were brother dreamers and they understood each other.

Boris Lugan has sung the song of the versts that eat up one's courage as well as the leather of one's shoes.

> "Versts! Versts! Scores and scores of them!
> Versts! Versts! A million or more of them!
> Dust! Dust! And the devils who play in it
> Blinding us fools who forever must stay in it."

Big Ivan and Anna faced the long versts to Bobruisk, but they were not afraid of the dust devils. They had the Dream. It made their hearts light and took the weary feeling from their feet. They were on their way. America was a long, long journey, but they had started, and every verst they covered lessened the number that lay between them and the Promised Land.

"I am glad the boy spoke to us," said Anna.

"And I am glad," said Ivan. "Some day he will come and eat with us in America."

They came to Bobruisk. Holding hands, they walked into it late one afternoon. They were eighty-nine versts from the little village on the Beresina, but they were not afraid. The Dream spoke to Ivan, and his big hand held the hand of Anna. The railway ran through Bobruisk, and that evening they stood and looked at the shining rails that went out in the moonlight like silver tongs reaching out for a low-hanging star.

And they came face to face with the Terror that evening, the Terror that had helped the spring breezes and the sunshine to plant the Dream in the brain of Big Ivan.

They were walking down a dark side street when they saw a score of men and women creep from the door of a squat, unpainted building. The little group remained on the sidewalk for a minute as if uncertain about the way they should go, then from the corner of the street came a cry of "Police!" and the twenty pedestrians ran in different directions.

It was no false alarm. Mounted police charged down the dark thoroughfare swinging their swords as they rode at the scurrying men and women who raced for shelter. Big Ivan dragged Anna into a doorway, and toward their hiding place ran a young boy who, like themselves, had no connection with the group and who merely desired to get out of harm's way till the storm was over.

The boy was not quick enough to escape the charge. A trooper pursued him, overtook him before he reached the sidewalk, and knocked him down with a quick

stroke given with the flat of his blade. His horse struck the boy with one of his hoofs as the lad stumbled on his face.

Big Ivan growled like an angry bear, and sprang from his hiding place. The trooper's horse had carried him on to the sidewalk, and Ivan seized the bridle and flung the animal on its haunches. The policeman leaned forward to strike at the giant, but Ivan of the Bridge gripped the left leg of the horseman and tore him from his saddle.

The horse galloped off, leaving its rider lying beside the moaning boy who was unlucky enough to be in a street where a score of students were holding a meeting.

Anna dragged Ivan back into the passageway. More police were charging down the street, and their position was a dangerous one.

"Ivan!" she cried, "Ivan! Remember the Dream! America, Ivan! *America!* Come this way! *Quick!*"

With strong hands she dragged him down the passage. It opened into a narrow lane, and, holding each other's hands, they hurried toward the place where they had taken lodgings. From far off came screams and hoarse orders, curses and the sound of galloping hoofs. The Terror was abroad.

Big Ivan spoke softly as they entered the little room they had taken. "He had a face like the boy to whom you gave the lucky pot," he said. "Did you notice it in the moonlight when the trooper struck him down?"

"Yes," she answered. "I saw."

They left Bobruisk next morning. They rode away on a great, puffing, snorting train that terrified Anna. The engineer turned a stopcock as they were passing the engine, and Anna screamed while Ivan nearly dropped the big trunk. The engineer grinned, but the giant looked up at him and the grin faded. Ivan of the Bridge was startled by the rush of hot steam, but he was afraid of no man.

The train went roaring by little villages and great pasture stretches. The real journey had begun. They began to love the powerful engine. It was eating up the versts at a tremendous rate. They looked at each other from time to time and smiled like two children.

They came to Minsk, the biggest town they had ever seen. They looked out from the car windows at the miles of wooden buildings, at the big church of St. Catharine, and the woolen mills. Minsk would have frightened them if they hadn't had the Dream. The farther they went from the little village on the Beresina the more courage the Dream gave to them.

On and on went the train, the wheels singing the song of the road. Fellow travelers asked them where they were going. "To America," Ivan would answer.

"To America?" they would cry. "May the little saints guide you. It is a long way, and you will be lonely."

"No, we shall not be lonely," Ivan would say.

"Ha! you are going with friends?"

"No, we have no friends, but we have something that keeps us from being lonely." And when Ivan would make that reply Anna would pat his hand and

the questioner would wonder if it was a charm or a holy relic that the bright-eyed couple possessed.

They ran through Vilna, on through flat stretches of Courland to Libau, where they saw the sea. They sat and stared at it for a whole day, talking little but watching it with wide, wondering eyes. And they stared at the great ships that came rocking in from distant ports, their sides gray with the salt from the big combers which they had battled with.

No wonder this America of ours is big. We draw the brave ones from the old lands, the brave ones whose dreams are like the guiding sign that was given to the Israelites of old—a pillar of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night.

The harbor master spoke to Ivan and Anna as they watched the restless waters.

"Where are you going, children?"

"To America," answered Ivan.

"A long way. Three ships bound for America went down last month."

"Ours will not sink," said Ivan.

"Why?"

"Because I know it will not."

The harbor master looked at the strange blue eyes of the giant, and spoke softly. "You have the eyes of a man who sees things," he said. "There was a Norwegian sailor in the *White Queen*, who had eyes like yours, and he could see death."

"I see life!" said Ivan boldly. "A free life——"

"Hush!" said the harbor master. "Do not speak so loud." He walked swiftly away, but he dropped a

ruble into Anna's hand as he passed her by. "For luck," he murmured. "May the little saints look after you on the big waters."

They boarded the ship, and the Dream gave them a courage that surprised them. There were others going aboard, and Ivan and Anna felt that those others were also persons who possessed dreams. She saw the dreams in their eyes. There were Slavs, Poles, Letts, Jews, and Livonians, all bound for the land where dreams come true. They were a little afraid—not two per cent of them had ever seen a ship before—yet their dreams gave them courage.

The emigrant ship was dragged from her pier by a grunting tug and went floundering down the Baltic Sea. Night came down, and the devils who, according to the Esthonian fishermen, live in the bottom of the Baltic, got their shoulders under the stern of the ship and tried to stand her on her head. They whipped up white combers that sprang on her flanks and tried to crush her, and the wind played a devil's lament in her rigging. Anna lay sick in the stuffy women's quarters, and Ivan could not get near her. But he sent her messages. He told her not to mind the sea devils, to think of the Dream, the Great Dream that would become real in the land to which they were bound. Ivan of the Bridge grew to full stature on that first night out from Libau. The battered old craft that carried him slouched before the waves that swept over her decks, but he was not afraid. Down among the million and one smells of the steerage he induced a thin-faced Livonian to play upon a mouth organ, and

Big Ivan sang Paleer's "Song of Freedom" in a voice that drowned the creaking of the old vessel's timbers, and made the seasick ones forget their sickness. They sat up in their berths and joined in the chorus, their eyes shining brightly in the half gloom:

"Freedom for serf and for slave,
Freedom for all men who crave
Their right to be free
And who hate to bend knee
But to Him who this right to them gave."

It was well that these emigrants had dreams. They wanted them. The sea devils chased the lumbering steamer. They hung to her bows and pulled her for'ard deck under emerald-green rollers. They clung to her stern and hoisted her nose till Big Ivan thought that he could touch the door of heaven by standing on her blunt snout. Miserable, cold, ill, and sleepless, the emigrants crouched in their quarters, and to them Ivan and the thin-faced Livonian sang the "Song of Freedom."

The emigrant ship pounded through the Cattegat, swung southward through the Skagerrack and the bleak North Sea. But the storm pursued her. The big waves snarled and bit at her, and the captain and the chief officer consulted with each other. They decided to run into the Thames, and the harried steamer nosed her way in and anchored off Gravesend.

An examination was made, and the agents decided to transship the emigrants. They were taken to London and thence by train to Liverpool, and Ivan and

Anna sat again side by side, holding hands and smiling at each other as the third-class emigrant train from Euston raced down through the green Midland counties to grimy Liverpool.

"You are not afraid?" Ivan would say to her each time she looked at him.

"It is a long way, but the Dream has given me much courage," she said.

"To-day I spoke to a Lett whose brother works in New York City," said the giant. "Do you know how much money he earns each day?"

"How much?" she questioned.

"Three rubles, and he calls the policemen by their first names."

"You will earn five rubles, my Ivan," she murmured. "There is no one as strong as you."

Once again they were herded into the bowels of a big ship that steamed away through the fog banks of the Mersey out into the Irish Sea. There were more dreamers now, nine hundred of them, and Anna and Ivan were more comfortable. And these new emigrants, English, Irish, Scotch, French, and German, knew much concerning America. Ivan was certain that he would earn at least three rubles a day. He was very strong.

On the deck he defeated all comers in a tug of war, and the captain of the ship came up to him and felt his muscles.

"The country that lets men like you get away from it is run badly," he said. "Why did you leave it?"

The interpreter translated what the captain said, and through the interpreter Ivan answered.

"I had a Dream," he said, "a Dream of freedom."

"Good," cried the captain. "Why should a man with muscles like yours have his face ground into the dust?"

The soul of Big Ivan grew during those days. He felt himself a man, a man who was born upright to speak his thoughts without fear.

The ship rolled into Queenstown one bright morning, and Ivan and his nine hundred steerage companions crowded the for'ard deck. A boy in a rowboat threw a line to the deck, and after it had been fastened to a stanchion he came up hand over hand. The emigrants watched him curiously. An old woman sitting in the boat pulled off her shoes, sat in a loop of the rope, and lifted her hand as a signal to her son on deck.

"Hey, fellers," said the boy, "help me pull me muvver up. She wants to sell a few dozen apples, an' they won't let her up the gangway!"

Big Ivan didn't understand the words, but he guessed what the boy wanted. He made one of a half dozen who gripped the rope and started to pull the ancient apple woman to the deck.

They had her halfway up the side when an undersized third officer discovered what they were doing. He called to a steward, and the steward sprang to obey.

"Turn a hose on her!" cried the officer. "Turn a hose on the old woman!"

The steward rushed for the hose. He ran with it to the side of the ship with the intention of squirting the old woman, who was swinging in midair and exhorting the six men who were dragging her to the deck.

"Pull!" she cried. "Sure, I'll give every one of ye a rosy red apple an' me blessing with it."

The steward aimed the muzzle of the hose, and Big Ivan of the Bridge let go of the rope and sprang at him. The fist of the great Russian went out like a battering ram; it struck the steward between the eyes, and he dropped upon the deck. He lay like one dead, the muzzle of the hose wriggling from his limp hands.

The third officer and the interpreter rushed at Big Ivan, who stood erect, his hands clenched.

"Ask the big swine why he did it," roared the officer.

"Because he is a coward!" cried Ivan. "They wouldn't do that in America!"

"What does the big brute know about America?" cried the officer.

"Tell him I have dreamed of it," shouted Ivan. "Tell him it is in my Dream. Tell him I will kill him if he turns the water upon this old woman."

The apple seller was on deck then, and with the wisdom of the Celt she understood. She put her lean hand upon the great head of the Russian and blessed him in Gaelic. Ivan bowed before her, then as she offered him a rosy apple he led her toward Anna, a great Viking leading a withered old woman who walked with the grace of a duchess.

"Please don't touch him," she cried, turning to the officer. "We have been waiting for your ship for six hours, and we have only five dozen apples to sell. It's a great man he is. Sure he's as big as Finn MacCool."

Some one pulled the steward behind a ventilator and revived him by squirting him with water from the hose which he had tried to turn upon the old woman. The third officer slipped quietly away.

The Atlantic was kind to the ship that carried Ivan and Anna. Through sunny days they sat up on deck and watched the horizon. They wanted to be among those who would get the first glimpse of the wonderland.

They saw it on a morning with sunshine and soft winds. Standing together in the bow, they looked at the smear upon the horizon, and their eyes filled with tears. They forgot the long road to Bobruisk, the rocking journey to Libau, the mad buckjumping boat in whose timbers the sea devils of the Baltic had bored holes. Everything unpleasant was forgotten, because the Dream filled them with a great happiness.

The inspectors at Ellis Island were interested in Ivan. They walked around him and prodded his muscles, and he smiled down upon them good-naturedly.

"A fine animal," said one. "Gee, he's a new white hope! Ask him can he fight?"

An interpreter put the question, and Ivan nodded. "I have fought," he said.

"Gee!" cried the inspector. "Ask him was it for purses or what?"

"For freedom," answered Ivan. "For freedom to stretch my legs and straighten my neck!"

Ivan and Anna left the Government ferryboat at the Battery. They started to walk uptown, making for the East Side, Ivan carrying the big trunk that no other man could lift.

It was a wonderful morning. The city was bathed in warm sunshine, and the well-dressed men and women who crowded the sidewalks made the two immigrants think that it was a festival day. Ivan and Anna stared at each other in amazement. They had never seen such dresses as those worn by the smiling women who passed them by; they had never seen such well-groomed men.

"It is a feast day for certain," said Anna.

"They are dressed like princes and princesses," murmured Ivan. "There are no poor here, Anna. None."

Like two simple children, they walked along the streets of the City of Wonder. What a contrast it was to the gray, stupid towns where the Terror waited to spring upon the cowed people. In Bobruisk, Minsk, Vilna, and Libau the people were sullen and afraid. They walked in dread, but in the City of Wonder beside the glorious Hudson every person seemed happy and contented.

They lost their way, but they walked on, looking at the wonderful shop windows, the roaring elevated trains, and the huge skyscrapers. Hours afterward they found themselves in Fifth Avenue near Thirty-third Street, and there the miracle happened to the

two Russian immigrants. It was a big miracle inasmuch as it proved the Dream a truth, a great truth.

Ivan and Anna attempted to cross the avenue, but they became confused in the snarl of traffic. They dodged backward and forward as the stream of automobiles swept by them. Anna screamed, and, in response to her scream, a traffic policeman, resplendent in a new uniform, rushed to her side. He took the arm of Anna and flung up a commanding hand. The charging autos halted. For five blocks north and south they jammed on the brakes when the unexpected interruption occurred, and Big Ivan gasped.

"Don't be flurried, little woman," said the cop. "Sure I can tame 'em by liftin' me hand."

Anna didn't understand what he said, but she knew it was something nice by the manner in which his Irish eyes smiled down upon her. And in front of the waiting automobiles he led her with the same care that he would give to a duchess, while Ivan, carrying the big trunk, followed them, wondering much. Ivan's mind went back to Bobruisk on the night the Terror was abroad.

The policeman led Anna to the sidewalk, patted Ivan good-naturedly upon the shoulder, and then with a sharp whistle unloosed the waiting stream of cars that had been held up so that two Russian immigrants could cross the avenue.

Big Ivan of the Bridge took the trunk from his head and put it on the ground. He reached out his arms and folded Anna in a great embrace. His eyes were wet.

"The Dream is true!" he cried. "Did you see, Anna? We are as good as they! This is the land where a muzhik is as good as a prince of the blood!"

The President was nearing the close of his address. Anna shook Ivan, and Ivan came out of the trance which the President's words had brought upon him. He sat up and listened intently:

We grow great by dreams. All big men are dreamers. They see things in the soft haze of a spring day or in the red fire of a long winter's evening. Some of us let those great dreams die, but others nourish and protect them, nurse them through bad days till they bring them to the sunshine and light which comes always to those who sincerely hope that their dreams will come true.

The President finished. For a moment he stood looking down at the faces turned up to him, and Big Ivan of the Bridge thought that the President smiled at him. Ivan seized Anna's hand and held it tight.

"He knew of my Dream!" he cried. "He knew of it. Did you hear what he said about the dreams of a spring day?"

"Of course he knew," said Anna. "He is the wisest man in America, where there are many wise men. Ivan, you are a citizen now."

"And you are a citizen, Anna."

The band started to play "My Country, 'tis of Thee," and Ivan and Anna got to their feet. Standing side by side, holding hands, they joined in with the others who had found after long days of journeying the blessed land where dreams come true.

—James Francis Dwyer.

V

THE INDIAN OF THE RESERVATION

THE big, square, barren, rude room which in its existence had progressed from store to schoolroom and on to council hall, was filled to overflowing with a throng of anachronous humanity, rank on rank, tier behind tier. There was the sound of moccasins slipping grittily over the knotty floor, of the dull, rhythmic thudding of a mother's foot as she trotted her fretful baby, the rustling of soft garments, the stirring of unhurried bodies, the hissing of stealthy whispers. Here and there two Indians might be seen conversing in the sign language; their hands, shielded from sight by encircling backs, were lifted scarcely above the level of their laps.

The people were massed one might say ethnologically. The main part of the crowd was Indian, squatting, seated on benches, or standing leaning against the walls. The two tribes sat separately, as did also the sexes of each. To right and left at the tapering ends of the rows were the mixed-bloods, dressed mainly like the whites except that their garments looked more home-made, more patternless, more illy put. Then quite at one end of the room and grouped about the chairman's table sat the whites; school and Agency employees, traders, soldiers, ranch neighbors; an in-

different, self-seeking, heterogeneous group. In the midst of these last, dapper, conspicuously well-dressed, and well-groomed, presided the inspector from Washington. His old, dignified face, slightly pompous, was crowned with gray hair brushed back from his brow. His hands rested squarely upon his knees. By his side, taking notes, sat his stenographer, his glance half curious and half supercilious playing constantly over the faces of the throng. At either end of the little table behind which sat the inspector, were stationed the interpreters, one for each tribe. The eyes of these men were searching, though their lips seemed to mock slightly, and when they spoke, rising to interpret, even though they passed on the phrases with a certain guarded vehemence, they seemed consciously to preserve a detached attitude, as do those who speak but will not be held accountable for what they say.

Perhaps the arrangement that caused the mixed-bloods and the other younger Indians to be the first to deliver their speeches was intentional on the part of someone. At any rate one by one they arose, in overalls, in spurs, in bright neckerchiefs, differing from each other in type and temperament, as differed also those two tribes, and indeed, the two races, represented there within the council room.

Occasionally after some speech the inspector would get up and pronounce in continuance a few elucidating words. He gesticulated slightly and conventionally. He bent a little toward the interpreters, each in turn. His words came slowly and with unction.

The subject of the council was the desire of the

Indian Bureau to throw open to white settlement a half of the reservation. The mixed-bloods and the younger Indians were, though they spoke but briefly, in accord in favoring the execution of the plan. Their words, however, from some lack in themselves of knowledge or of conviction, were not uttered in a manner calculated to tip the scale greatly their way.

"It's a question of water rights," they said. "We must have money to buy those rights and how else can we obtain it? It's an obligation to our children."

Again and again the same note was struck. One by one the young men arose, and one by one sat down again. The interpreters mopped their tired brows. The inspector sipped frequently from a glass of water upon his table.

The air was full of the odor of people, pungent with the herb perfume worn by the Indians in little sacks sewed to the clothing, acrid with the smell of sage clinging to shawls and dresses, with the flavor of smoke-tanned buckskin. A half-open window let in a little fitful breeze that played wantonly with the dust showing in the sunlight of the upper reaches of the room, flirting and whisking about the heads of the throng.

At last it came time for the weightier speeches, for those of the councilmen, of the chiefs, of indeed the older men of the two tribes, the patriarchs of this patriarchal people.

"Sell our land?" they cried. "Retreat? Give up? Be forced into contact with intermingling whites? Take money in place of our land? What, money for

the good of these traders who will get it all from us in the end?" Their old faces hardened; their eyes flamed. "Give up? Retreat? Move on? Abrogate the old promises, the old treaties? What, *again?*" Their lips twisted bitterly. "Do you not know, does not the Great Father at Washington know, that all we ask now of life is a little land, a little peace, a little place wherein to live quietly our quiet life, and in the end a little ground for our narrow bed? Move on! That we think was the first word the whites—" the "outsiders," the "aliens," was the name they in the Indian tongue gave this other race—"said to us. It seems they are saying it yet." The soft bitter voices ceased; the old men sank into their seats, the interpreters, too, relaxed, wiping their faces.

The inspector stood up cautiously, apologetically even. "But these old men, the chiefs, do not seem to have caught the point. The whole question of selling or not selling turns on the matter of their water rights; on theirs and their children's as has been said. Land even in this beautiful Wyoming valley is a mockery without water. They can I am sure understand that; water they must have."

An old chief rose solemnly, turned deep, scornful eyes upon the inspector. "Let the white man from Washington go but a mile yonder," extended arm pointed that way, "and he will see the river that flows down our valley and waters our land. It is there. It is ours. It is born in these mountains above us. God made them, I suppose as he made it. It is ours."

Along the packed rows there was a slight stirring.

Patiently again the inspector arose. "I know that it is hard for the old people to understand that having *water* does not necessarily mean having *rights* to that water. There exist hundreds of white men below you, beyond the border of your reservation, who have taken up claims along this same stream and who have filed on its water prior to any Indian having done so. The State must recognize this priority. The whites have filed on the water and have paid the dues. Beside that as the law stands now the Indians cannot individually take out water rights. I know that you will say that when this reservation was given to these two tribes, a matter of a generation and a half ago, the water was included with the land, 'to the center of the streams bordering the reservation,' as your old treaty reads. But times and conditions have changed since then. At that period the Federal Government controlled the water of Wyoming, now its disposition has been turned over to the State. Where the Indians stand in this matter has never been decided by law."

The mixed-bloods who understood at least partially, shifted uneasily.

"But now—although the question of priority has still not been decided—the Indian Bureau—which I represent—says that you as a tribe may buy your water rights. For this you must have money." He named a sum reaching far into the thousands. "The sale of your land will bring you this amount of money, at least. This thing is intricate and impossible I believe to elucidate to the older people, your leaders. They must, I fear, just hear my statements and, if

they can, believe." With his hands he made a deprecating little gesture. Then he sat down.

There was silence in the room, complete save for a slight stirring, the sound of deep breathing, and the fretting, here and there, of a hungry child.

Finally at the back of the room, by some shifting of his pose, by thrusting himself forward beyond the relief of his line, an Indian made his presence known. He was a man of powerful build, of nobly moulded head; his hair instead of having been braided, had been gathered forward into two loosely twisted strands; his eyes showed, speculative yet keen, his mouth was sharply chiseled though withal soft in its lines, and there was a kindly look on his face which gave somehow the impression of the morning light seen upon the rugged side of a great mountain. In age he seemed to be between the young and the old.

As he made his presence known there was a slow turning of the heads in his direction, a slight tensing of the crowd. The old chiefs appeared suddenly eager and filled with hope; as for the younger men and the mixed-bloods they glanced at him and looked away again, as if, sighing they said: "Another on the wrong side. Ah, the blind old men!"

Then he spoke. His voice was deep, very virile, carefully subdued as something held in leash, and yet through it there seemed to run a tremor, a quaver almost, that gave an impression of strange intensity.

I repeat his words with elision.

"I am not one of the old men," he said, "and yet I can easily remember the time when this valley, these

mountains, were ours; not because someone had given them to us, but because we had taken them for ourselves, because our arrows flew straightest, our spears reached furthest, our horsemen rode fastest, our hearts were bravest."

Here several of the old men grunted sympathetically. More and more the faces of the throng were turned toward the speaker.

"Then everything was changed. The strangers came like a flood, like our rivers in the spring; they surged over us and they left us—as we are. Perhaps this was the will of the Stranger-on-High, we cannot tell. . . . But these strangers on earth were not altogether unkind to us. For what they took they gave a sort of compensation. It was as though they carried away from us fat buffaloes and then handed to us in exchange each a little slice of their meat. They deprived us of our valley and our mountains but instead they gave us each eighty acres of the land. Then they sent more strangers with chains and three-legged toys to measure these off correctly for us. They gave us wire for our fences but only enough so that we must spend much money for more. They gave us seed, but also so little that we were driven to buy more. We worked —some of us with the chains and three-legged toys— some at the ditches, every way we could, for now we needed a new thing—something of which we had before known nothing, *money*. We received it—and then we spent it."

Again faint grunts and groans encouraged him.

"For we cannot keep money long. We are children.

This the Great Father in Washington understands, and also that our ears are dull, that our eyes cannot read his written words. Therefore, in his kindness, he sends to us this man to speak to us face to face." He turned his slow gaze upon the inspector. In his eyes was the look of mockery. "We have listened to his words. But what has he said to us? 'Give up the eighty acres, for your children to be born, give up the money you earned and spent, give up your homes; as you gave up this valley and these mountains. The white men need them. Your day is past. But I am not unkind. Without compensation I will not deprive you. See, I will give you even a little more money—'" He stopped abruptly. His eyes drooped, his shoulders, his hands, the whole man.

A strained silence had fallen upon the room, smothered it. From it escaped the faint sighing of the younger men. The chiefs stiffened as they sat.

By an effort the speaker seemed to rouse himself. He stared strangely about the room. "There was a little boy once," he said, and his voice had grown dreamy, slightly high in pitch, "and this little boy held his hand out toward the flames, nearer,—I saw it—the fire was so pretty, so warm, it danced, purred, sparkled. His hand crept nearer, nearer. His father watched him. At the last moment he caught him and pulled him away. The child cried then, he struggled in his father's arms, he pushed away from him, he fought. Again he reached out toward the flame. But finally he looked up into the man's face and suddenly it seemed to dawn on him that, although he could not

understand, this was indeed his father, old and wise and loving; and that he, by comparison, was only a little misguided child. . . ." The strange, vibrant voice dwindled, broke. The speaker made a wide gesture toward the attentive inspector, held it while the interpreters got forth in English his last sentence. Then he sank back into his old place against the wall; with one bent hand he wiped the sweat from his brow.

A faint sound of muttering passed over the room; old fierce eyes were veiled, young keen ones peered incredulously. But the inspector was on his feet on the instant, his hand outstretched to grasp the golden moment.

"There is no more to be said," he cried. "Our ears are ringing with words. Our hearts are full. I have here, prepared, a paper. Let those who for their own good and the good of their children are of a mind to sell, now sign it."

Slowly, amidst moving and murmuring, the long paper, in the hands of one of the interpreters, made its deliberate rounds. Difficult signatures were inscribed in slow succession. Ancient, unaccustomed hands, deft enough with spear or bow, grasped awkwardly the pen and with it made their wavering "mark."

Some there were of the old men, indeed the majority of them, who wrapping their blankets about them arose, and shambling, withdrew, aloof and soundless.

Like a shaken kaleidoscope the council broke up.

The inspector leaned back in his chair, a hand shielding the working of his mouth. His eyes searched the variegated, dissolving throng. The stenographer,

still seated and playing with his idle pencil, shot him an understanding glance.

Later the Half-breed, standing on the board walk outside the trading store, a box of crackers in one hand, a paper containing pickles in the other, was lunching heartily. Suddenly he shifted everything into his left hand and strode down into the road. For in company with his wife and a young son the last of the speakers was passing.

The Half-breed's extended hand grasped the Indian's.

"I thank you for what you said," he cried. "It was a noble thing to have done. You faced them all; the old timers, the chiefs, public opinion, prejudice. And you won. It was a brave act."

The rugged, illuminated face was turned to him, the deep eyes rested squarely upon his. "You have perhaps forgotten," he said. "You are younger than I am and too you have been for a long time with the whites—but I remember well the time when we were boys and our great head-chief Black Star used to sit and talk with us. Yes, you have perhaps forgotten," he repeated, and his look, just touched with yearning, rested upon the younger man. "But I remember—I have never forgotten what he used to say to us. 'Be brave,' he would tell us. 'That is the chief thing to learn; to do what each one believes is right, to speak for the right, everywhere, always. To be fearless of tongues, of persecution, to take counsel with our own minds and being sure to speak out surely. That,' he always said to us, 'and that only, is the man's part.'"

—Grace Coolidge.

VI

THE NIGHT ATTACK

When B Company marched out of the camp for the morning skirmish practice, Tom Kennedy of squad five was feeling depressed. His corporal, John Wheeler, had just given him a scolding, and now wore a stern expression on his youthful yet somehow granite-like countenance. Kennedy, glancing out of the corner of his eye, saw and interpreted the expression.

He was a thin, pale youth, who had gone from high school into the bank, where he was employed in a humble capacity as clerk. His lack of physical strength had prevented him from taking part in school athletics; the impecuniosity of his family had kept him from a share in many healthful, boyish activities. He had been a bookish boy and had shown himself quick at figures; many of his classmates envied him when, after graduation, a subordinate place in the First National Bank had been given him. In his second year of service there he was promoted to a clerkship; and when the bank announced its willingness to let some of its employees attend the military training camp, Kennedy had presented himself as a volunteer.

Without experience in the handling of arms, without natural dexterity and without the self-confidence that a boy derives from participation in sports or from a

life outdoors, Kennedy was not the most promising of "rookies." He would have made a better showing in the early drills perhaps had he been less concerned with the dread of being regarded as a "dub." What made him especially self-conscious was the fact that his corporal was the son of the president of the First National Bank. It seemed to Kennedy, inexperienced youth that he was, that his whole future might depend on the impression he made on the president's son.

He had long known John Wheeler by reputation. Wheeler had been half back on his college football team; he was a yachtsman of more than local renown. As corporal, he was alert, industrious and energetic; his efficiency caused Kennedy to be only the more keenly aware of his own incompetence. The other men in the tent were all older than he, all better educated than he, and without in the least intending to make him feel inferior they did make him feel so. As a matter of fact, they thought he was an unassuming and obliging person, who had, as one of them expressed it, not much small change in conversation.

Now, after a week at the camp, Kennedy had begun to make himself a nuisance to his companions—the thing that he had most dreaded being. He had caught cold, and had coughed at frequent intervals throughout the night; he had buried his head under his blankets and tried to suppress the coughs, and he had blown his nose with as little reverberation as possible, but he had, nevertheless, received intimations that he was disturbing the sleep of his tent mates. In the morning one of them, Morrison, a student in a medical school,

offered him some quinine pills and advised him to report at sick call. But Kennedy had resolved not to be knocked out by sickness; he thanked Morrison for the pills and said he thought he should get through all right. His feelings were hurt, however, when after breakfast Wheeler said:

"Come, fellows, let's roll up the tent; if we don't give the sun and air a chance in here, we'll all of us be sniffling."

The corporal started in to undo the guy ropes and then exclaimed wrathfully. "Who's the man that tied these ropes in hard knots? He's a landlubber, all right."

"I should say!" remarked Morrison, who was at work on the other side of the tent. "I'm not guilty."

"I'm afraid I am." Kennedy's admission was the more rueful because so croaking.

"A man who can only tie a hard knot or a granny has no business ever to touch a rope." Wheeler snapped out the words while his fingers worked busily. "I should think before coming to a camp a fellow would learn to tie a few knots."

Kennedy accepted the reproof in silence—if a sudden access of coughing can be termed silence. He was finding it hard work to disengage one of the knots of his own making; presently Wheeler, having freed the other ropes, came up and unceremoniously took possession of that at which Kennedy was picking.

"Undo your pack, take the rope that's fastened to your shelter half and I'll give you a lesson," commanded Wheeler.

To the object lesson in tying hitches, half hitches, slipknots and other useful knots Kennedy gave close attention; but when he tried to do what he had just seen his instructor do he became confused.

"Are you as slow as that counting bills in the bank?" Wheeler asked. "I wonder that they keep you. You don't seem to have learned to use your hands."

He snatched the rope and then began another demonstration for the mortified youth; Kennedy could not have been more hurt if he had been lashed with it. The whistle blew; the order, "Fall in!" was shouted at the head of the street.

"Quick, now! Do up your pack!" Wheeler tossed back the rope, and Kennedy made a dive into the tent where his equipment lay scattered. Hastily cramming things together, he discovered when he had his pack rolled up and fastened that he had left out the rubber poncho. In the street the men were all lined up at attention; he alone was unready. The first sergeant was calling the roll; the corporals were reporting: "Squad one?" "All present." "Squad two?" "All present." Kennedy flung on his pack and crammed his poncho under his mattress, where it would not be visible. "Squad five?" "Private Kennedy absent." "Squad six?" "All present."

Kennedy fastened his canteen to his belt, caught up his rifle and took his place in the rear rank.

He heard the corporals far down the line reporting, "All present." He alone had been delinquent. Wheeler's face seemed more forbidding than ever.

And that was why, as the company marched out

for the day's work, Kennedy felt depressed. He was making a poor showing; he had won the outspoken disapproval of the man whose good opinion he most heartily desired. Besides, he was miserable in body; nose, eyes and throat were all inflamed, the pack seemed heavier than it ought to be, and there was no early-morning enthusiasm in his legs. A glance at Wheeler's face still further depressed his spirits. He had never seen the corporal look so black, and he knew it was all on account of having such a "dub" in the squad!

It was really not on that account at all. What was troubling the corporal was a sense of his severity toward a subordinate who seemed to be doing the best he could. He was chagrined that he had been so sharp-tongued with the little fellow; he had got into the habit of thinking of Kennedy rather pityingly as "the little fellow."

All the long morning B Company was put through skirmish drill; the sun was hot, the air heavy; with all too brief intermissions the men were kept at work; running, leaping, casting themselves on their faces, and pulling the trigger and throwing the bolt of their rifles. Lying prone, with neck and shoulder muscles aching under the weight of the pack, Kennedy experienced the greatest discomfort, for then his nose became an abomination to him. And at those times, snuffling, coughing and gasping, he was painfully aware that to the other members of the squad, and particularly to the corporal, he must seem nothing less than a curse.

The luncheon hour afforded him a little rest. But all the afternoon there was drill on the parade ground;

and at supper Kennedy was almost too tired to eat. His cold was no better, his cough was more frequent and racking, and he feared that he should be a greater nuisance to his tent mates than on the preceding night. After supper he thought he should go into the town and get some cough drops; but that was a mile walk, and before undertaking it he decided to stretch himself out on his bed for a few minutes' rest. Wheeler came up and asked him how he was feeling.

"All right, if only I don't keep you fellows awake," Kennedy croaked, grateful for the question.

"You don't sound all right. I should think you'd better see the doctor."

"Oh, I sound worse than I am."

Wheeler walked away, with a good-natured laugh that made Kennedy feel better than a cough drop could have done. It showed him that the corporal did not have an unfriendly attitude toward him, and it stimulated his resolve to let the corporal see that he did not lack staying power.

For a few minutes he had been reclining on his bed, when he was horrified to hear the B Company whistle, followed by the shout, "Fall in, B Company!" When he emerged from the tent, he heard the second order that was being relayed down the street, "Fall in with the rifle and the full pack!" For a dismal moment Kennedy thought of going up to the captain and pleading unfitness for further duty. Then he gritted his teeth, slung his pack, which he had not yet unrolled, on his aching shoulders and took up his rifle. The other occupants of the tent made their appearance on

the run, uttering maledictions and cries of grief and wonderment. Had not they been worked hard enough for one day! This kind of thing was an outrage!

When the company was lined up, Captain Hughes said, "B Company is ordered out to hold a section of trench against an expected night attack. Squads right!"

While the men proceeded at route step, they lamented facetiously the ordeal ahead of them. Kennedy snuffled and shuffled along, trying to keep his head up and his shoulders from drooping. He looked apprehensively at the western sky; the sun had gone down in a black cloud wrack, which was swarming higher and heavier. The sultry air was suddenly fanned by a cool wind, lightning flashed in the mass of clouds, and thunder pealed.

"Going to have a little real war this evening, I guess," observed Morrison.

"The storm may not hit us," said Wheeler.

"Everything that can will hit us to-day," replied Morrison.

By the time the company had reached the trenches, which were dug on the edge of a wide field, it was growing dark. The wind was blowing hard and flung splashes of rain into the men's faces.

Captain Hughes halted his command and called the members round him.

"This is the section that you are to defend," he said. "You see it consists of four separate front-line trenches, each just long enough and wide enough to accommodate eight men. Each front trench is con-

nected with the second line of trenches by a short runway. Behind the second line is the shelter, or dugout, for those who are not on duty in the trenches. You will take turns in holding the front line; each squad will be relieved every fifteen minutes. The rest of you will keep under cover in the shelter—under cover from the enemy, that is." There was an uncertain ripple of laughter; the rain was beginning now to pour down. "At what hour the attack may develop I can't tell you," continued the captain, "but it will no doubt be sometime between now and sunrise."

In the shelter, which was a large rectangular pit six feet deep, the men opened their packs and got out their ponchos—all except Kennedy, who stood looking on while his comrades proceeded to protect themselves against the now pelting rain.

Wheeler, poking his head through the opening in his poncho, saw Kennedy standing thus.

"Why don't you get out your poncho?" he asked.

"I forgot to put it in my pack."

"That's the limit, a night like this. You've got a frightful cold, too." Wheeler pulled off the poncho that he had just put on. "Get into this and keep yourself as dry as you can."

"No, I wouldn't think of taking your——"

"You're under orders now, and you'll take what your corporal tells you." Wheeler thrust the rubber garment over his subordinate's head. "There you are; I don't want to feel responsible for your having pneumonia."

Then, as Captain Hughes called, "Squad leaders,

gather round!" Wheeler moved away to receive instructions.

Seating himself cross-legged, Kennedy arranged the poncho as well as he could over his rifle. The rain came down in sheets, poured from the brims of hats, formed puddles on the ground, oozed through trousers and boots and leggings. By the occasional lightning flashes Kennedy could see the group of corporals holding conference with the captain near by; he could see the huddled forms of the privates like himself, the ponchos shining on their shoulders, the pools glistening at their feet.

In a few moments the conference broke up; then Captain Hughes raised his voice sharply.

"Mr. Wheeler, where is your poncho?"

"I haven't got it, sir."

"A man who is careless about himself is not likely to look after his men, and that is an officer's first duty. You set a bad example to the members of your squad, Mr. Wheeler."

"Yes, sir."

Wheeler saluted and the captain turned away just as Kennedy came forward. The corporal gripped Kennedy's wrist and held him fast, then led him in silence back to his place.

"That's all right," he whispered in Kennedy's ear. "Don't you butt in. You'd only get it in the neck if you did."

Kennedy, believing that a soldier's first duty is to obey, did not persist; he saw the captain leave the shelter and join a group of officers on the bank.

"It isn't fair, though, for you to take the blame," he began.

"It's of no importance," Wheeler answered.

A few moments later Kennedy was convinced that the corporal was mistaken. While Wheeler was talking to another member of the squad, Morrison said to Kennedy in a low voice:

"I guess Wheeler's chance for promotion is gone now. They're going to make some new sergeants tomorrow, and I thought Wheeler would surely be one; but I guess that forgetting his poncho has queered him with the captain. He's a stickler about little things."

"It doesn't seem fair," repeated Kennedy, as if speaking to himself.

Night had settled down, the blackest kind of night, when the first platoon was ordered into the advance trenches. From ambush among the trees behind the shelter searchlights began to play against the woods five hundred yards away, out of which the attack was expected to come. The watchers in the shelter and the trenches remained in utter darkness while the streaming lines of rain and the distant trees emerged into view under the sweeping rays. Back and forth the searchlights plied, raking the whole sector of forest that bounded the field. The men in the shelter, who had stood up to see what the searchlights might disclose, soon sat down again and wrapped their ponchos about themselves more snugly. The minutes passed; there was no sound except that made by the determined, trampling rain.

Wheeler, who had been peering over the top of the

embankment, came and seated himself between Kennedy and Morrison.

"There's one thing," he murmured. "The enemy are getting it same as we are."

Morrison grunted. "How do you know? They're regulars, and maybe they haven't left their barracks yet. Maybe they won't till about 2 A. M."

"Don't be always taking the joy out of life," Wheeler entreated.

At last came the turn of the second platoon. They filed out through the runways into the second-line trench, where they waited until the squads of the first platoon returned from the sections that they had been holding.

"Second platoon, load!"

In the pitch blackness it was not an easy thing to do. Kennedy got his clip jammed in the magazine and for a few moments could not shove it down or pull it out. Then, when he gave a final desperate wrench, out it came with a jump, slipped through his fingers and fell somewhere in the mud.

"Lock your pieces. Forward!"

Kennedy had to straighten up and move on without having found his cartridges. When he was in his place between Wheeler and Morrison, he took another clip out of his belt and, working carefully and slowly, inserted it in the magazine. The sound of others working with their rifles let him know that he had not been the only one to get into difficulty.

From somewhere behind, Captain Hughes gave instructions:

"Keep your eyes on that strip of woods. Squad on

the right, take the sector from the ravine to the top of the knoll. Next squad, the sector from the top of the knoll to that tree that stands out in front of the woods. Next squad, the sector from that tree to the big rock. Fourth squad, the sector from the big rock to the road. If anyone comes out of the woods in your sector, fire on him."

"No one will come," murmured Morrison. "Not for five or six hours yet."

But they all stood peering intently over the low ridge of earth that protected the top of the trench and on which their rifles rested. Without cessation the searchlights swept back and forth along the belt of woods; for only the briefest interval was any section left in darkness. Time passed, and still the only sound was the steady drumming of the rain.

Then suddenly out of the belt of woods broke a line of men and charged forward. Instantly all along the advance trenches burst jets of flame and the vicious crackle and bang of the rifles. After the wearisome and uncomfortable vigil, Kennedy felt warmed into excitement; he got off three shots before the enemy dropped to the ground and began shooting in their turn. Then an enemy platoon on the right made a short rush forward and dropped, and immediately resumed firing. By platoon rushes the line advanced, and its fire seemed to grow steadier and stronger as it drew nearer. In contrast, the fire of the defenders of the trenches weakened. Only three men in Wheeler's squad were maintaining a steady fire; the other squads displayed a corresponding feebleness of resistance.

"Fire faster, men!" cried Captain Hughes.

But fire faster they did not—and could not. More than half of them were now having the trouble in loading their rifles that Kennedy had experienced—and was having again. Fumbling in the darkness with the wet, slippery mechanism, trying hurriedly to slide the cartridge clips into place, man after man had jammed his magazine, and with clumsy fingers was frantically trying to adjust it. Meanwhile, the fire of the enemy became more intense; they drew nearer and nearer by platoon rushes; and at last Captain Hughes gave the order to the defenders of the trenches, "Cease firing!"

Then, a few yards away, up sprang the enemy and, with bayonets fixed and a wild yell that at the last fizzled out into laughter, charged down on the trenches. They stopped on the edge and greeted the defenders derisively: "Well, boys, all dead, ain't you?" "Fired as if you were, anyway." "How'd you have liked it if this had been a real attack?" "Any of you boys want to have a little bayonet practice?"

Captain Hughes gave the command to unload. After "inspection arms" had been ordered, the captain pointed the moral of the evening's experience: "You see, it's not enough to be good daylight soldiers—important though that is. You have got to be able to use your rifles as well in the dark."

B Company marched back to camp; Kennedy sought an audience with Captain Hughes. He could only say in a husky whisper:

"I want to explain about Corporal Wheeler's poncho." He had to stop for a fit of coughing; the captain bent

down and looked at him sharply. "He took off his poncho and made me put it on—I'd forgotten mine. I hope it won't count against him."

"What do you mean by staying on duty in this condition?" demanded the captain.

"I sound worse than I am."

The captain grunted. "Report at sick call tomorrow. I'll remember what you say about Wheeler. Good night!"

The next morning, when Kennedy returned from the hospital tent, having been pronounced fit to continue on active duty, he found the members of squad five congratulating Wheeler on his promotion to the rank of sergeant.

"Here's the fellow that saved the job for me." Wheeler clapped Kennedy's shoulder. "Captain Hughes said you went to him and told tales out of school."

Kennedy looked pleased. "I heard the captain tell you that you mightn't be good at looking after your men," he answered. "I thought I'd show him."

"Business, just business," said Wheeler with a twinkle in his eyes. "Dad would never forgive me if I let anything happen to you. I feel just as responsible for the bank, having you up here, as he does. Now come and I'll give you another lesson in how to tie a knot."

—Arthur Stanwood Pier.

VII

THE PATH OF GLORY

I

It was so poor a place—a bitten-off morsel "at the beyond end of nowhere"—that when a February gale came driving down out of a steel sky and shut up the little lane road and covered the house with snow a passer-by might have mistaken it all, peeping through its icy fleece, for just a huddle of the brown bowlders so common to the country thereabouts.

And even when there was no snow it was as bad—worse, almost, Luke thought. When everything else went brave and young with new greenery; when the alders were laced with the yellow haze of leaf bud, and the brooks got out of prison again, and arbutus and violet and buttercup went through their rotation of bloom up in the rock pastures and maple bush—the farm buildings seemed only the bleaker and barer.

That forlorn unpainted little house, with its sagging blinds! It squatted there through the year like a one-eyed beggar without a friend—lost in its venerable white-beard winters, or contemplating an untidy welter of rusty farm machinery through the summers.

When Luke brought his one scraggy little cow up the lane he always turned away his head. The place made him think of the old man who let the birds build nests in

his whiskers. He preferred, instead, to look at the glories of Bald Mountain or one of the other hills. There was nothing wrong with the back drop in the home stage-set; it was only home itself that hurt one's feelings.

There was no cheer inside, either. The sagging old floors, though scrubbed and spotless, were uncarpeted; the furniture meager. A pine table, a few old chairs, a shabby scratched settle covered by a thin horse blanket as innocent of nap as a Mexican hairless—these for essentials; and for embellishment a shadeless glass lamp on the table, about six-candle power, where you might make shift to read the *Biweekly*—times when there was enough money to have a Biweekly—if you were so minded; and window shelves full of corn and tomato cans, still wearing their horticultural labels, where scrawny one-legged geraniums and yellowing coleus and begonia contrived an existence of sorts.

And then, of course, the mantelpiece with the black-edged funeral notice and shiny coffin plate, relics of Grampaw Peel's taking-off; and the pink mug with the purple pansy and "Woodstock, N. Y.," on it; the photograph of a forgotten cousin in Iowa, with long antennæ-shaped mustaches; the Bible with the little china knobs on the corners; and the pile of medicine testimonials and seed catalogues—all these contributed something.

If it was not a beautiful place within, it was, also, not even a pleasant place spiritually. What with the open door into his father's room, whence you could hear the thin frettings made by the man who had lain these ten

years with chronic rheumatism, and the untuneful whistlings of whittling Tom, the big brother, the shapely supple giant whose mind had never grown since the fall from the barn room when he was eight years old, and the acrid complaints of the tall gaunt mother, stepping about getting their inadequate supper, in her gray wrapper, with the ugly little blue shawl pinned round her shoulders, it was as bad a place as you might find in a year's journeying for anyone to keep bright and "chirk up" in.

Not that anyone in particular expected "them poor Hayneses" to keep bright or "chirk up." As far back as he could remember, Luke had realized that the hand of God was laid on his family. Dragging his bad leg up the hill pastures after the cow, day in and day out, he had evolved a sort of patient philosophy about it. It was just inevitable, like a lot of things known in that rock-ribbed and fatalistic region—as immutably decreed by heaven as foreordination and the damnation of unbaptized babes. The Hayneses had just "got it hard."

Yet there were times, now he was come to a gangling fourteen, when Luke's philosophy threatened to fail him. It wasn't fair—so it wasn't! They weren't bad folks; they'd done nothing wicked. His mother worked like a dog—"no fair for her," any way you looked at it. There were times when the boy drank in bitterly every detail of the miserable place he called home and knew the depths of an utter despair.

If there was only some way to better it all! But there was no chance. His father had been a failure at everything he touched in early life, and now he was a

hopeless invalid. Tom was an idiot—or almost—and himself a cripple. And Nat! Well, Nat "wa'n't willin"—not that one should blame him. Times like these, a lump like a roc's egg would rise in the boy's throat. He had to spit—and spit hard—to conquer it.

"If we hain't the gosh-awfulest lot!" he would gulp.

To-day, as he came up the lane, June was in the land. She'd done her best to be kind to the farm. All the old heterogeneous rosebushes in the woodyard and front "lawn" were piled with fragrant bloom. Usually Luke would have lingered to sniff it all, but he saw only one thing now with a sudden skipping at his heart—an automobile standing beside the front porch.

It was not the type of car to cause cardiac disturbance in a connoisseur. It was, in fact, of an early vintage, high-set, chunky, brassily æsthetic, and given to asthmatic choking on occasion; but Luke did not know this. He knew only that it spelled luxury beyond all dreams. It belonged, in short, to his Uncle Clem Cheesman, the rich butcher who lived in the village twelve miles away; and its presence here signaled the fact that Uncle Clem and Aunt Mollie had come to pay one of their detestable quarterly visits to their poor relations. They had come while he was out, and Maw was in there now, bearing it all alone.

Luke limped into the house hastily. He was not mistaken. There was a company air in the room, a stiff hostile-polite taint in the atmosphere. Three visitors sat in the kitchen, and a large hamper, its contents partly disgorged, stood on the table. Luke knew that

it contained gifts—the hateful, merciful, nauseating charity of the better-off.

Aunt Mollie was speaking as he entered—a large, high-colored, pouter-pigeon-chested woman, with a great many rings with bright stones, and a nodding pink plume in her hat. She was holding up a bifurcated crimson garment, and greeted Luke absently.

"Three pair o' them underdrawers, Delia—an' not a break in one of 'em! I sez, as soon as I see Clem layin' 'em aside this spring, 'Them things'll be jest right fur Delia's Jere, layin' there with the rheumatiz.' They may come a little loose; but, of course, you can't be choicey. I've b'en at Clem fur five years to buy him union suits; but he's always b'en so stuck on red flannen. But now he's got two aut'mobiles, countin' the new delivery, I guess he's gotta be more tony; so he made out to spare 'em. And now that hat, Delia—it ain't a mite wore out, an' fur all you'll need one it's plenty good enough. I only had it two years and I guess folks won't remember; an' what if they do—they all know you get my things. Same way with that collarette. It's a little moth-eaten, but it won't matter fur you. . . . The gray suit you can easy cut down fur Luke, there—"

She droned on, the other woman making dry automatic sounds of assent. She looked cool—Maw—Luke thought; but she wasn't. Not by a darn sight! There was a spot of pink in each cheek and she stared hard every little bit at Grampaw Peel's funeral plate on the mantel. Luke knew what she was thinking of—poor Maw! She was burning in a fire of her own lighting.

She had brought it all on herself—on the whole lot of them.

Years ago she had been just like Aunt Mollie. The daughters of a prosperous village carpenter, they had shared beads, beaux and bangles until Maw, in a moment's madness, had chucked it all away to marry poor Paw. Now she had made her bed, she must lie in it. Must sit and say "Thank you!" for Aunt Mollie's leavings, precious scraps she dared not refuse—Maw, who had a pride as fierce and keen as any! It was devilish! Oh, it was kind of Aunt Mollie to give; it was the taking that came so bitter hard. And then they weren't genteel about their giving. There was always that air of superiority, that conscious patronage, as now, when Uncle Clem, breaking off his conversation with the invalid in the next room about the price of mutton on the hoof and the chances of the Democrats' getting in again, stopped fiddling with his thick plated watch chain and grinned across at big Tom to fling his undeviating flower of wit:

"Runnin' all to beef, hain't ye, Tom, boy? Come on down to the market an' we'll git some A 1 sirloins outen ye, anyway. Do your folks that much good."

It was things like this that made Luke want to burn, poison, or shoot Uncle Clem. He was not a bad man, Uncle Clem—a thick sandy chunk of a fellow, given to bright neckties and a jocosity that took no account of feelings. Shaped a little like a log, he was—back of his head and back of his neck—all of a width. Little lively green eyes and bristling red mustaches. A complexion a society bud might have envied. Why was it a

butcher got so pink and white and sleek? Pork, that's what Uncle Clem resembled, Luke thought—a nice, smooth, pale-fleshed pig, ready to be skinned.

His turn next! When crops and politics failed and the joke at poor Tom—Tom always giggled inordinately at it, too—had come off, there was sure to be the one about himself and the lame duck next. To divert himself of bored expectation, Luke turned to stare at his cousin, S'norta.

S'norta, sitting quietly in a chair across the room, was seldom known to be emotional. Indeed, there were times when Luke wondered whether she had not died in her chair. One had that feeling about S'norta, so motionless was she, so uncompromising of glance. She was very prosperous-looking, as became the heiress to the Cheesman meat business—a fat little girl of twelve, dressed with a profusion of ruffles, glass pearls, gilt buckles, and thick tawny curls that might have come straight from the sausage hook in her papa's shop.

S'norta had been consecrated early in life to the unusual. Even her name was not ordinary. Her romantic mother, immersed in the prenatal period in the hair-lifting adventures of one Señorita Carmena, could think of no lovelier appellation when her darling came than the first portion of that sloe-eyed and restless lady's title, which she conceived to be baptismal; and in due course she had conferred it, together with her own pronunciation, on her child. A bold man stopping in at Uncle Clem's market, as Luke knew, had once tried to pronounce and expound the cognomen in a very different fashion; but he had been hustled unceremoniously from

the place, and S'norta remained in undisturbed possession of her honors.

Now Luke was recalled from his contemplation by his uncle's voice again. A lull had fallen and out of it broke the question Luke always dreaded.

"Nat, now!" said Uncle Clem, leaning forward, his thick fingers clutching his fat knees. "You ain't had any news of him since quite a while ago, have you?" The wit that was so preponderable a feature of Uncle Clem's nature bubbled to the surface. "Dunno but he's landed in jail a spell back and can't git out again!" The lively little eyes twinkled appreciatively.

Nobody answered. It set Maw's mouth in a thin, hard line. You wouldn't get a rise out of old Maw with such tactics—Maw, who believed in Nat, soul and body. Into Luke's mind flashed suddenly a formless half prayer: "Don't let 'em nag her now—make 'em talk other things!"

The Lord, in the guise of Aunt Mollie, answered him. For once, Nat and Nat's character and failings did not hold her. She drew a deep breath and voiced something that claimed her interest:

"Well, Delia, I see you wasn't out at the Bisbee's funeral. Though I don't s'pose anyone really expected you, knowin' how things goes with you. Time was, when you was a girl, you counted in as big as any and traveled with the best; but now"—she paused delicately, and coughed politely with an appreciative glance round the poor room—"they ain't anyone hereabouts but's talkin' about it. My land, it was swell! I couldn't ask no better for my own. Fourteen cabs, and the

hearse sent over from Rockville—all pale gray, with mottled gray horses. It was what I call tasty.

"Matty wasn't what you'd call well-off—not as lucky as some I could mention; but she certainly went off grand! The whole Methodist choir was out, with three numbers in broken time; and her cousin's brother-in-law from out West—some kind of bishop—to preach. Honest, it was one of the grandest sermons I ever heard! Wasn't it, Clem?"

Uncle Clem cleared his throat thoughtfully.

"Humiliatin'!—that's what I'd call it. A strong maur'l sermon all round. A man couldn't hear it 'thout bein' humiliated more ways'n one." He was back at the watch-chain again.

"It's a pity you couldn't of gone, Delia—you an' Matty always was so intimate too. You certainly missed a grand treat, I can tell you; though, if you hadn't the right clothes——"

"Well, I haven't," Maw spoke dryly. "I don't go nowheres, as you know—not even church."

"I s'pose not. Time was it was different, though, Delia. Ain't nobody but talks how bad off you are. Ann Chester said she seen you in town a while back and wouldn't of knowed it was you if it hadn't of b'en you was wearin' my old brown cape, an' she reconnized it. Her an' me got 'em both alike to the same store in Rockville. You was so changed, she said she couldn't hardly believe it was you at all."

"Sometimes I wonder myself if it is," said Maw grimly.

"Well, 's I was sayin', it was a grand funeral. None

better! They even had engraved invites, over a hundred printed—and they had folks from all over the state. They give Clem, here, the contract fur the supper meat——"

"The best of everything!" Uncle Clem broke in. "None o' your cheap graft. Gimme a free hand. Jim Bisbee tole me himself. 'I want the best ye got,' he sez; an' I give it. Spring lamb and prime ribs, fancy hotel style——"

"An' Em Carson baked the cakes fur 'em, sixteen of 'em; an' Dickison the undertaker's tellin' all over they got the best quality shroud he carries. Well, you'll find it all in the *Biweekly*, under Death's Busy Sickle. Jim Bisbee shore set a store by Matty oncet she was dead. It was a grand affair, Delia. Not but what we've had some good ones in our time too."

It was Aunt Mollie's turn to stare pridefully at the Peel plate on the chimney shelf.

"A thing like that sets a family up, sorta."

Uncle Clem had taken out a fat black cigar with a red-white-and-blue band. He bit off the end and alternately thrust it between his lips or felt of its thickness with a fondling thumb and finger. Luke, watching, felt a sudden compassion for the cigar. It looked so harried.

"I always say," Aunt Mollie droned on, "a person shows up what he really is at the last—what him and his family stands fur. It's what kind of a funeral you've got that counts—who comes out an' all. An' that was true with Matty. There wa'n't a soul worth namin' that wasn't out to hers."

How Aunt Molly could gouge—even amicably! And funerals! What a subject, even in a countryside where a funeral is a social event and the manner of its furniture marks a definite social status! Would they never go? But it seemed at last they would. Incredibly, somehow, they were taking their leave, Aunt Mollie kissing Maw good-by, with the usual remark about "hopin' the things would help some," and about being "glad to spare somethin' from my great plenty."

She and Señorita were presently packed into the car and Tom had gone out to goggle at Uncle Clem cranking up, the cold cigar still between his lips. Now they were off—choking and snorting their way out of the wood-yard and down the lane. Aunt Mollie's pink feather streamed into the breeze like a pennon of triumph.

Maw was standing by the stove, a queer look in her eyes; so queer that Luke didn't speak at once. He limped over to finger the spilled treasures on the table.

"Gee! Lookit, Maw! More o' them prunes we liked so; an' a bag o' early peaches; an' fresh soup meat fur a week—"

A queer trembling had seized his mother. She was so white he was frightened.

"Did you sense what it meant, Luke—what Aunt Molly told us about Matty Bisbee? We was left out deliberate—that's what it meant. Her an' me that was raised together an' went to school and picnics all our girlhood together! Never could see one 'thout the other when we was growin' up—Jim Bisbee knew that

too! But"—her voice wavered miserably—"I didn't get no invite to her funeral. I don't count no more, Lukey. None of us, anywheres. . . . We're jest them poor Gawd-forsaken Hayneses."

She slipped down suddenly into a chair and covered her face, her thin shoulders shaking. Luke went and touched her awkwardly. Times he would have liked to put his arms round Maw—now more than ever; but he didn't dare.

"Don't take on, Maw! Don't!"

"Who's takin' on?" She lifted a fierce, sallow, tear-wet face. "Hain't no use makin' a fuss. All's left's to work—to work, an' die after a while."

"I hate 'em! Uncle Clem an' her, I mean."

"They mean kindness—their way." But her tears started afresh.

"I hate 'em!" Luke's voice grew shriller. "I'd like —I'd like— Oh, damn 'em!"

"Don't swear, boy!"

It was Tom who broke in on them. "It's a letter from Rural Free Delivery. He jest dropped it."

He came up, grinning, with the missive. The mother's fingers closed on it nervously.

"From Nat, mebbe—he ain't wrote in months."

But it wasn't from Nat. It was a bill for a last payment on the "new harrow," brought three years before.

II

One of the earliest memories Luke could recall was the big blurred impression of Nat's face bending over

his crib of an evening. At first flat, indefinite, remote as the moon, it grew with time to more human, intimate proportions. It became the face of "brother," the black-haired, blue-eyed big boy who rollicked on the floor with or danced him on his knee to—

> This is the way the lady rides!
> Tritty-trot-trot; tritty-trot-trot!

Or who, returning from school and meeting his faltering feet in the lane, would toss him up on his shoulder and canter him home with mad, merry scamperings.

Not that school and Nat ever had much in common. Even as a little shaver Luke had realized that, Nat was the family wilding, the migratory bird that yearned for other climes. There were the times when he sulked long days by the fire, and the springs and autumns when he played an unending round of hookey. There were the days when he was sent home from school in disgrace; when protesting notes, and sometimes even teacher, arrived.

"It's not that Nat's a bad boy, Mrs. Haynes," he remembered one teacher saying; "but he's so active, so full of restless animal spirits. How are we ever going to tame him?"

Maw didn't know the answer—that was sure. She loved Nat best—Luke had guessed it long ago, by the tone of her voice when she spoke to him, by the touch of her hand on his head, or the size of his apple turnover, so much bigger than the others'. Maw must have built heavily on her hopes of Nat those days—her one per-

fect child. She was so proud of him! In the face of all ominous prediction she would fling her head high.

"My Nat's a Peel!" she would say. "Can't never tell how he'll turn out."

The farmers thereabouts thought they could tell her. Nat was into one scrape after another—nothing especially wicked; but a compound of the bubbling mischief in a too ardent life—robbed orchards, broken windows, practical jokes, Halloween jinks, vagrant whimsies of an active imagination.

It was just that Nat's quarters were too small for him, chiefly. Even he realized this presently. Luke would never forget the sloppy March morning when Nat went away. He was wakened by a flare of candle in the room he shared with his brothers. Tom, the twelve-year-old, lay sound asleep; but Nat, the big man of fifteen, was up, dressed, bending over something he was writing on a paper at the bureau. There was a fat little bundle beside him, done up in a blue-and-white bandanna.

Day was still far off. The window showed black; there was the sound of a thaw running off the eaves; the whitewashed wall was painted with grotesque leaping shadows by the candle flame. At the first murmur, Nat had come and put his arms about him.

"Don't ye holler, little un; don't ye do it! 'Tain't nothin'—on'y Natty's goin' away a spell; quite a spell, little un. Now kiss Natty. . . . That's right! . . . An' you lay still there an' don't holler. An' listen here, too: Natty's goin' to bring ye somethin'—a grand red ball, mebbe—if you're good. You wait an' see!"

But Natty hadn't brought the ball. Two years had passed without a scrap of news of him; and then—he was back. Slipped into the village on a freighter at dusk one evening. A forlorn scarecrow Nat was; so tattered of garment, so smeared of coal dust, you scarcely knew him. So full of strange sophistications, too, and new trails of thought—so oddly rich of experience. He gave them his story. The tale of an exigent life in a great city; a piecework life made of such flotsam labors as he could pick up, of spells of loafing, of odd incredible associates, of months tagging a circus, picking up a task here and there, of long journeyings through the country, "riding the bumpers"—even of alms asked at back doors!

"Oh, not a tramp, Nat!"

The hurt had quivered all through Maw.

But Nat only laughed.

"Jiminy Christmas, it was great!"

He had thrown back his head, laughing. That was Nat all through—sipping of life generously, no matter in what form.

He had stayed just three weeks. He had spent them chiefly defeating Maw's plans to keep him. Wanderlust kept him longer the next time. That was eight years ago. Since then he had been back home three times. Never so poor and shabby as at first—indeed, Nat's wanderings had prospered more or less—but still remote, somewhat mysterious, touched by new habits of life, new ways of speech.

The countryside, remembering the manner of his first return, shook its head darkly. A tramp—a

burglar, even. God knew what! When, on his third visit home, he brought an air of extreme opulence, plenty of money, and a sartorial perfection undreamed of locally, the heads wagged even harder. A gambler probably; a ne'er-do-well certainly; and one to break his mother's heart in the end.

But none of this was true, as Luke knew. It was just that Nat hated farming; that he liked to rove and take a floater's fortune. He had a taste for the mechanical and followed incomprehensible quests. San Francisco had known him; the big races at Cincinnati; the hangars at Mineola. He was restless—Nat; but he was respectable. No one could look into his merry blue eyes and not know it. If his labors were uncertain and sporadic, and his address that of a nomad, it all sufficed, at least for himself.

If at times Luke felt a stirring doubt that Nat was not acquitting himself of his family duty, he quenched it fiercely. Nat was different. He was born free; you could tell it in his talk, in his way of thinking. He was like an eagle and hated to be bound by earthly ties. He cared for them all in his own way. Times when he was back he helped Maw all he could. If he brought money he gave of it freely; if he had none, just the look of his eye or the ready jest on his lip helped.

Upstairs in a drawer of the old pine bureau lay some of Nat's discarded clothing—incredible garments to Luke. The lame boy, going to them sometimes, fingered them, pondering, reconstructing for himself the fabric of Nat's adventures, his life. The ice-cream pants of a by-gone day; the pointed, shriveled yellow

Oxfords! the silk-front shirt; the odd cuff link or stud—they were like a genie-in-a-bottle, these poor clothes! You rubbed them and a whole Arabian Night's dream unfurled from them.

And Nat lived it all! But people—dull stodgy people like Uncle Clem and Aunt Mollie, and old Beckonridge down at the store, and a dozen others—these criticized him for not "workin' reg'lar" and giving a full account of himself.

Luke, thinking of all this, would flush with impotent anger.

"Oh, let 'em talk, though! He'll show 'em some day! They dunno Nat. He'll do somethin' big fur us all some day."

III

Midsummer came to trim the old farm with her wreaths. It was the time Luke loved best of all—the long, sweet, loam-scented evenings with Maw and Tom on the old porch; and sometimes—when there was no fog—Paw's cot, wheeled out in the stillness. But Maw was not herself this summer. Something had fretted and eaten into her heart like an acid ever since Aunt Mollie's visit and the news of Matty Bisbee's funeral.

When, one by one, the early summer festivities of the neighborhood had slipped by, with no inclusion of the Hayneses, she had fallen to brooding deeply,—to feeling more bitterly than ever the ignominy and wretchedness of their position.

Luke tried to comfort her; to point out that this

summer was like any other; that they "never had mattered much to folks." But Maw continued to brood; to allude vaguely and insistently to "the straw that broke the camel's back." It was bitter hard to have Maw like that—home was bad enough, anyway. Sometimes on clear, soft nights, when the moon came out all splendid and the "peepers" sang so plaintively in the Hollow, the boy's heart would fill and grow enormous in his chest with the intolerable sadness he felt.

Then Maw's mood lifted—pierced by a ray of heavenly sunlight—for Nat came home!

Luke saw him first—heard him, rather; for Nat came up the lane—oh, miraculous!—driving a motor car. It was not a car like Uncle Clem's—not even a step-brother to it. It was low and almost noiseless, and shaped like one of those queer torpedoes they were fighting with across the water. It was colored a soft dust-gray and trimmed with nickel; and, huge and powerful though it was, it swung to a mere touch of Nat's hand.

Nat stood before them, clad in black leather Norfolk and visored cap and leggings.

"Look like a fancy brand of chauffeur, don't I?'" he laughed, with the easy resumption of a long-broken relation that was so characteristically Nat.

But Nat was not a chauffeur. Something much bigger and grander. The news he brought them on top of it all took their breaths away. Nat was a special demonstrator, out on a brand-new high-class job for a house handling a special line of high-priced goods.

And he was to go to Europe in another week—did they get it straight? Europe! Jiminy! He and another fellow were taking cars over to France and England.

No; they didn't quite get it. They could not grasp its significance, but clung humbly, instead, to the mere glorious fact of his presence.

He stayed two days and a night; and summer was never lovelier. Maw was like a girl, and there was such a killing of pullets and extravagance with new-laid eggs as they had never known before. At the last he gave them all presents.

"Tell the truth," he laughed, "I'm stony broke. 'Tisn't mine, all this stuff you see. I got some kale in advance—not much, but enough to swing me; but of course, the outfit's the company's. But I'll tell you one thing: I'm going to bring some long green home with me, you can bet! And when I do'—Nat had given Maw a prodigious nudge in the ribs—"when I do—I ain't goin' to stay an old bachelor forever! Do you get that?"

Maw's smile had faded for a moment. But the presents were fine—a new knife for Tom, a book for Luke, and twenty whole round dollars for Maw, enough to pay that old grocery bill down at Beckonridge's and Paw's new invoice of patent medicine.

They all stood on the porch and watched him as far as they could see; and Maw's black mood didn't return for a whole week.

Evenings now they had something different to talk about—journeys in seagoing craft; foreign countries and the progress of the "Ee-ropean" war, and Nat's

likelihood—he had laughed at this—of touching even its fringe. They worked it all up from the boiler-plate war news in the *Biweekly* and Luke's school geography. Yes; for a little space the blackness was lifted.

Then came the August morning when Paw died. This was an unexpected and unsettling contingency. One doesn't look for a "chronic's" doing anything so unscheduled and foreign to routine; but Paw spoiled all precedent. They found him that morning with his heart quite still, and Luke knew they stood in the presence of imminent tragedy.

It's all very well to peck along, hand-to-mouth fashion. You can manage a living of sorts; and farm produce, even scanty, unskillfully contrived, and the charity of relatives, and the patience of tradesmen, will see you through. But a funeral—that's different! Undertaker—that means money. Was it possible that the sordid epic of their lives must be capped by the crowning insult, the Poormaster and the Pauper's Field? If only poor Paw could have waited a little before he claimed the spotlight—until prices fell a little or Nat got back with that "long green"!

Maw swallowed her bitter pill.

She went to see Uncle Clem and ask! And Uncle Clem was kind.

"He'll buy a casket—he's willin' fur that—an' send a wreath and pay fur notices, an' even half on a buryin' lot; but he said he couldn't do no more. The high cost has hit him too. . . . An' where are we to git the rest? He said—at the last—it might be better all round fur us to take what Ellick Flick would gimme

outen the Poor Fund—" Maw hadn't been able to go on for a spell.

A pauper's burial for Paw! Surely Maw would manage better than that! She tried to find a better way that very night.

"This farm's mortgaged to the neck; but I calculate Ben Travis won't care if I'm a mind to put Paw in the south field. It hain't no mortal good fur anything else, anyhow; an' he can lay there if we want. It's a real pleasant place. An' I can git the preacher myself—I'll give him the rest o' the broilers; an' they's seasoned hickory plankin' in the lean-to. Tom, you come along with me."

All night Luke had lain and listened to the sound of big Tom's saw and hammer. Tom was real handy if you told him how—and Maw would be showing him just how to shape it all out. Each hammer blow struck deep on the boy's heart.

Maw lined the home-made box herself with soft old quilts, and washed and dressed her dead herself in his faded outlawed wedding clothes. And on a morning soft and sweet, with a hint of rain in the air, they rode down in the farm wagon to the south field together—Paw and Maw and Luke—with big Tom walking beside the aged knobby horse's head.

Abel Gazzam, a neighbor, had seen to the grave; and in due course the little cavalcade reached the appointed spot inside the snake fence—a quiet place in a corner, under a graybeard elm. As Maw had said, it was "a pleasant place for Paw to lay in."

There were some old neighbors out in their own rigs,

and Uncle Clem had brought his family up in his car, with a proper wreath; and Reverend Kearns came up and—declining all lien on the broilers—read the burial service, and spoke a little about poor Paw. But it wasn't a funeral, no how. No supper; no condolence; no viewing "the remains"—not even a handshake! Maw didn't even look at her old friends, riding back home between Tom and Luke, with her head fiercely high in the air.

A dull depression settled on Luke's heart. It was all up with the Hayneses now. They had saved Paw from charity with their home-made burial; but what had it availed? They might as well have gone the whole figure. Everybody knew! There wasn't any comeback for a thing like this. They were just nobodies—the social pariahs of the district.

IV

Somehow, after the fashion of other years, they got their meager crops in—turnips, potatoes and Hubbard squashes put up in the vegetable cellar; oats cradled; corn husked; the buckwheat ready for the mill; even Tom's crooked furrows for the spring sowings made. Somehow, Maw helping like a man and Tom obeying like a docile child, they took toll of their summer. And suddenly September was at their heels—and then the equinox.

It seemed to Luke that it had never rained so much before. Brown vapor rose eternally from the valley flats; the hilltops lay lost entirely in clotted murk. By

periods hard rains, like showers of steel darts, beat on the soaking earth. Gypsy gales of wind went ricocheting among the farm buildings, setting the shingles to snapping and singing; the windows moaned and rattled. The sourest weather the boy could remember!

And on the worst day of all they got the news. Out of the mail box in the lane Luke got it—going down under an old rubber cape in a steady blinding pour. It got all damp—the letter, foreign postmark, stamp and all—by the time he put it into Maw's hand.

It was a double letter—or so one judged, first opening it. There was another inside, complete, sealed, and addressed in Nat's hand; but one must read the paper inclosed with it first—that was obvious. It was just a strip, queer, official looking, with a few lines typed upon it and a black heading that sprang out at one strangely. They read it together—or tried to. At first they got no sense from it. Paris—from clear off in France—and then the words below—and Maw's name at the top, just like the address on the newspaper:

MRS. JERE HAYNES,
Stony Brook, New York.

It was for Maw all right. Then quite suddenly the words came clear through the blur:

MRS. JERE HAYNES,
Stony Brook, New York.

Dear Madam: We regret to inform you that the official *communiqué* for September sixth contains the tid-

ings that the writer of the enclosed letter, Nathaniel Haynes, of Stony Brook, New York, U. S. A., was killed while on duty as an ambulance driver in the Sector of Verdun, and has been buried in that region. Further details will follow.

The American Ambulance, Paris.

Even when she realized, Maw never cried out. She sat wetting her lips oddly, looking at the words that had come like evil birds across the wide spaces of earth. It was Luke who remembered the other letter:

"*My dear kind folks—Father, Mother and Brothers:* I guess I dare call you that when I get far enough away from you. Perhaps you won't mind when I tell you my news.

"Well we came over from England last Thursday and struck into our contract here. Things was going pretty good; but you might guess yours truly couldn't stand the dead end of things. I bet Maw's guessed already. Well sir it's that roving streak in me I guess. Never could stick to nothing steady. It got me bad when I got here any how.

"To cut it short I throwed up my job with the firm yesterday and have volunteered as an Ambulance driver. Nothing but glory; but I'm going to like it fine! They're short-handed anyhow and a fellow likes to help what he can. Wish I could send a little money; but it took all I had to outfit me. Had to cough up eight bucks for a suit of underclothes. What do you know about that?

"You can write me in care of the Ambulance, Paris.

"Now Maw don't worry! I'm not going to fight. I did try to get into the Foreign Legion but had no chance. I'm all right. Think of me as a nice little Red Cross boy and the Wise Willie on the gas wagon. And won't I have the hot stuff to make old Luke's eyes pop out! Hope Paw's legs are better. And Maw have a kiss on me. Mebbe you folks think I don't appreciate you. If I was any good at writing I'd tell you different.

"Your Son and Brother,
"NAT HAYNES."

The worst of it all was about Maw's not crying—just sitting there staring at the fire, or where the fire had been when the wood had died out of neglect. It's not in reason that a woman shouldn't cry, Luke felt. He tried some words of comfort:

"He's safe, anyhow, Maw—'member that! That's a whole lot too. Didn't always know that, times he was rollin' round so over here. You worried a whole lot about him, you know."

But Maw didn't answer. She seldom spoke at all—moved about as little as possible. When she had put out food for him and Tom she always went back to her corner and stared into the fire. Luke had to bring a plate to her and coax her to eat. Even the day Uncle Clem and Aunt Mollie came up she did not notice them. Only once she spoke of Nat to Luke.

"You loved him the most, didn't ye, Maw?" he asked timidly one dreary evening.

She answered in a sort of dull surprise.

"Why, lad, he was my first!" she said; and after a bit, as though to herself: "His head was that round and shiny when he was a little fellow it was like to a little round apple. I mind, before he ever come, I bought me a cap fur him over to Rockville, with a blue bow onto it. He looked awful smart an' pretty in it."

Sometimes in the night Luke, sleeping ill and thinking long, lay and listened for possible sounds from Maw's room. Perhaps she cried in the nights. If she only would—it would help break the tension for them all. But he never heard anything but the rain—steadily, miserably beating on the sodden shingles overhead.

It was only Luke who watched the mail box now. One morning his journey to it bore fruit. No sting any longer; no fear in the thick foreign letter he carried.

"It'll tell ye all's to it, I bet!" he said eagerly.

Maw seemed scarcely interested. It was Luke who broke the seal and read it aloud.

It was written from the Ambulance Headquarters, in Paris—written by a man of rare insight, of fine and delicate perception. All that Nat's family might have wished to learn he sought to tell them. He had himself investigated Nat's story and he gave it all fully and freely. He spoke in praise of Nat; of his friendly associations with the Ambulance men; of his good nature and cheerful spirits; his popularity and ready willingness to serve. People, one felt, had loved Nat over there.

He wrote of the preliminary duties in Paris, the preparations—of Nat's final going to join one of the three

sections working round Verdun. It wasn't easy work that waited for Nat there. It was a stiff contract guiding the little ambulance over the shell-rutted roads, with deftness and precision, to those distant dressing stations where the hurt soldiers waited for him. It was a picture that thrilled Luke and made his pulses tingle—the blackness of the nights; the rumble of moving artillery and troops; the flash of starlights; the distant crackling of rifle fire; the steady thunder of heavy guns.

And the shells! It was mighty close they swept to a fellow, whistling, shrieking, low overhead; falling to tear out great gouges in the earth. It was enough to wreck one's nerve utterly; but the fellows that drove were all nerve. Just part of the day's work to them! And that was Nat too. Nat hadn't known what fear was—he'd eaten it alive. The adventurer in him had gone out to meet it joyously.

Nat was only on his third trip when tragedy had come to him. He and a companion were seeking a dressing station in the cellar of a little ruined house in an obscure French village, when a shell had burst right at their feet, so to speak. That was all. Simple as that. Nat was dead instantly and his companion—oh, Nat was really the lucky one. . . .

Luke had to stop for a little time. One couldn't go on at once before a thing like that. . . . When he did, it was to leave behind the darkness, the shell-torn houses, the bruised earth, the racked and mutilated humans. . . . Reading on, it was like emerging from Hades into a great Peace.

"I wish it were possible to convey to you, my dear Mrs. Haynes, some impression of the moving and beautiful ceremony with which your son was laid to rest on the morning of September ninth, in the little village of Aucourt. Imagine a warm, sunny, late-summer day, and a village street sloping up a hillside, filled with soldiers in faded, dusty blue, and American Ambulance drivers in khaki.

"In the open door of one of the houses, the front of which was covered with the tri-color of France, the coffin was placed, wrapped in a great French flag, and covered with flowers and wreaths sent by the various American sections. At the head a small American flag was placed, on which was pinned the *Croix de Guerre*—a gold star on a red-and-green ribbon—a tribute from the army general to the boy who gave his life for France.

"A priest, with six soldier attendants, led the procession from the courtyard. Six more soldiers bore the coffin, the Americans and representatives of the army branches following, bearing wreaths. After these came the General of the Army Corps, with a group of officers, and a detachment of soldiers with arms reversed. At the foot of the hill a second detachment fell in and joined them. . . .

"The scene was unforgettable, beautiful and impressive. In the little church a choir of soldiers sang and a soldier-priest played the organ, while the Chaplain of the Army Division held the burial service. The chaplain's sermon I have asked to have reproduced and sent to you, together with other effects of your son's. . . .

"The chaplain spoke most beautifully and at length, telling very tenderly what it meant to the French people that an American should give his life while trying to help them in the hour of their extremity. The name of this chaplain is Henri Deligny, *Aumônier Militaire*, Ambulance 16–27, Sector 112; and he was assisted by the permanent curé of the little church, Abbé Blondelle, who wishes me to assure you that he will guard most reverently your son's grave, and be there to receive you when the day may come that you shall wish to visit it.

"After leaving the church the procession marched to the military cemetery, where your son's body was laid beside the hundreds of others who have died for France. Both the lieutenant and general here paid tributes of appreciation, which I will have sent to you. The general, various officers of the army, and ambulance assisted in the last rites. . . .

"I have brought back and will send you the *Croix de Guerre*. . . ."

Oh, but you couldn't read any further—for the great lump of pride in your throat, the thick mist of tears in your eyes. A sob escaped the boy. He looked over at Maw and saw the miraculous. Maw was awake at last and crying—a new-fledged pulsating Maw emerged from the brown chrysalis of her sorrows.

"Oh, Maw! . . . Our Nat! . . . All that—that—funeral! . . . Some funeral, Maw!" The boy choked.

"My Nat!" Maw was saying. "Buried like a king! . . . Like a King o' France!" She clasped her hands tightly.

It was like some beautiful fantasy. A Haynes—the despised and rejected of earth—borne to his last home with such pomp and ceremony!

"There never was nothin' like it heard of round here, Maw. . . . If folks could only know—"

She lifted her head as at a challenge.

"Why, they're goin' to know, Luke—for I'm goin' to tell 'em. Folks that have talked behind Nat's back—folks that have pitied us—when they see this—like a King o' France!" she repeated softly. "I'm goin' down to town to-day, Luke."

V

It was dusk when Maw came back; dusk of a clear day, with a rosy sunset off behind the hills. Luke opened the door for her and he saw that she had brought some of the sun along in with her—its colors in her worn face; its peace in her eyes. She was the same, yet somehow new. Even the tilt of her crazy old bonnet could not detract from a strange new dignity that clothed her.

She did not speak at once, going over to warm her gloveless hands at the stove, and staring up at the Grampaw Peel plate; then:

"When it comes—my Nat's medal—it's goin' to set right up here, 'stead o' this old thing—an' the letters and the sermons in my shell box I got on my weddin' trip. . . . Lawyer Ritchie told me to-day what it means, the name o' that medal—Cross o' War! It's a decoration fur soldiers and earned by bravery."

She paused; then broke out suddenly:

"I b'en a fool, settin' here grievin'. My Nat was a hero, an' I never knew it! . . . A hero's folks hadn't ought to cry. It's a thing too big for that. Come here, you little Luke! Maw hain't b'en real good to you an' Tommy lately. You're gittin' all white an' peaked. Too much frettin' 'bout Nat. You an' me's got to stop it, I tell you. Folks round here ain't goin' to let us fret——"

"Folks! Maw!" The words burst from the boy's heart. "Did they find out? . . . You showed it to 'em? Uncle Clem——"

Maw sniffed.

"Clem! Oh, he was real took aback; but he don't count in on this—not big enough." Then triumph hastened her story. "It's the big ones that's mixin' into this, Lukey. Seems like they'd heard somethin' a spell back in one o' the county papers, an' we didn't know. . . . Anyhow, when I first got into town I met Judge Geer. He had me right into his office in Masonic Hall, 'fore I could git my breath almost—had me settin' in his private room, an' sent his stenugifer out fur a cup o' cawfee fur me. He had me give him the letter to read, an' asked dare he make some copies. The stenugifer took 'em like lightnin', right there.

"The judge had a hard time of it, coughin' an' blowin' over that letter. He's goin' to send some copies to the New York papers right off. He took me acrost the hall and interduced me to Lawyer Ritchie. Lawyer Ritchie, he read the letter too. 'A hero!' they called Nat; an' me 'A hero's mother!'

"'We ain't goin' to forgit this, Mis' Haynes,' Lawyer Ritchie said. 'This here whole town's proud o' your Nat.' . . . My land! I couldn't sense it all! . . . Me, Delia Haynes, gettin' her hand wrung, 'count o' anything Nat'd b'en doin', by the big bugs round town! Judge Geer, he fetched 'em all out o' their offices—Slade, the supervisor, and Fuller Brothers, and old Sumner Pratt—an' all! An' Ben Watson asked could he have a copy to put in the *Biweekly*. It's goin' to take the whole front page, with an editor'al inside. He said the Rockville Center News'd most likely copy it too.

"I was like in a dream! . . . All I'd aimed to do was to let some o' them folks know that those people acrost the ocean had thought well of our Nat, an' here they was breakin' their necks to git in on it too! . . . Goin' down the street they was more of it. Lu Shiffer run right out o' the hardware store an' left the nails he was weighin' to shake hands with me; and Jem Brand came; and Lan'lord Peters come out o' the Valley House an' spoke to me. . . . I felt awful public. An' Jim Beckonridge come out of the Emporium to shake too.

"'I ain't seen you down in town fur quite a spell,' he sez. 'How are you all up there to the farm? . . . Want to say I'm real proud o' Nat—a boy from round here!' he sez. . . . Old Beckonridge, that was always wantin' to arrest Nat fur takin' his chestnuts or foolin' down in the store!

"I just let 'em drift—seein' they had it all fixed fur me. All along the street they come an' spoke to me.

Mame Parmlee, that ain't b'en able to see me fur three years, left off sweepin' her porch an' come down an' shook my hand, an' cried about it; an' that stylish Mis' Willowby, that's president o' the Civil Club, followed me all over the Square and asked dare she read a copy o' the letter an' tell about Nat to the schoolhouse next Wednesday.

"It seems Judge Geer had gone out an' spread it broadcast that I was in town, for they followed me everywhere. Next thing I run into Reverend Kearns and Reverend Higby, huntin' me hard. They both had one idee.

"'We wanted to have a memor'al service to the churches 'bout Nat,' they sez; 'then it come over us that it was the town's affair really. So, Mis' Haynes,' they sez, 'we want you should share this thing with us. You mustn't be selfish. You gotta give us a little part in it too. Are you willin'?'"

"It knocked me dumb—me givin' anybody anything! Well, to finish, they's to be a big public service in the Town Hall on Friday. They'll have it all flags—French ones, an' our'n too. An' the ministers'll preach; an' Judge Geer'll tell Nat's story an' speak about him; an' the Ladies' Guild'll serve a big hot supper, because they'll probably be hundreds out; an' they'll read the letters an' have prayers for our Nat!" She faltered a moment. "An' we'll be there too—you an' me an' Tom—settin' in the seat o' honor, right up front! . . . It'll be the greatest funeral service this town's ever seen, Luke."

Maw's face was crimson with emotion.

"An' Uncle Clem an' Aunt Mollie——"

"Oh—them!" Maw came back to earth and smiled tolerantly. "They was real sharp to be in it too. Mollie took me into the parlor an' fetched a glass o' wine to stren'then me up." Maw mused a moment; then spoke with a touch of patronage: "I'm goin' to knit Clem some new socks this winter. He says he can't git none like the oldtime wool ones; an' the market floors are cold. Clem's done what he could, an' I'll be real glad to help him out. . . . Oh, I asked 'em to come an' set with us at the service—S'norta too. I allowed we could manage to spare 'em the room."

She dreamed again, launched on a sea of glory; then roused to her final triumph:

"But that's only part, Luke. The best's comin'. Jim Beckonridge wants you to go down an' see him. 'That lame boy o' yours,' he sez, 'was in here a spell ago with some notion about raisin' bees an' buckwheat together, an' gittin' a city market fur buckwheat honey. Slipped my mind,' he sez, 'till I heard what Nat'd done; an' then it all come back. City party this summer had the same notion an' was lookin' out for a likely place to invest some cash in. You send that boy down an' we'll talk it over. Shouldn't wonder if he'd get some backin'. I calculate I might help him, myself,' he sez, 'I b'en thinkin' of it too.' . . . Don't seem like it could hardly be true."

"Oh, Maw!" Luke's pulses were leaping wildly. Buckwheat honey was the dear dream of many a long hour's wistful meditation. "If we could—I could

study up about it an' send away fur printed books. We could make some money——"

But Maw had not yet finished.

"An' they's some about Tom, too, Luke! That young Doctor Wells down there—he's on'y b'en there a year—he come right up, an' spoke to me, in the midst of several. 'I want to talk about your boy,' he sez. 'I've wanted to fur some time, but didn't like to make bold; but now seem's as good a time as any.' 'They're all talkin' of him,' I sez. 'Well,' he sez, 'I don't mean the dead, but the livin' boy—the one folks calls Big Tom. I've heard his story, an' I got a good look over him down here in the store a while ago. Woman'—he sez it jest like that—'if that big boy o' your'n had a little operation, he'd be as good as any.'

"I answered him patient, an' told him what ailed Tom an' why he couldn't be no different—jest what old Doc Andrews told us—that they was a little piece o' bone druv deep into his skull that time he fell. He spoke real vi'lent then. 'But—my Lord!—woman,' he sez, 'that's what I'm talkin' about. If we jack up that bone'—trepannin', he called it too—'his brains'd git to be like anybody else's.' Told me he wants fur us to let him look after it. Won't cost anything unless we want. They's a hospital to Rockville would tend to it, an' glad to—when we git ready. . . . My poor Tommy! . . . Don't seem's if it could be true."

Her face softened, and she broke up suddenly.

"I got good boys all round," she wept. "I always said it; an' now folks know."

Luke lay on the old settle, thinking. In the air-tight stove the hickory fagots crackled, with jeweled color-play. On the other side Tom sat whittling silently—Tom, who would presently whittle no more, but rise to be a man.

It was incredible! Incredible that the old place might some day shake off its shackles of poverty and be organized for a decent struggle with life! Incredible that Maw—stepping briskly about getting the supper—should be singing!

Already the room seemed filled and warmed with the odors of prosperity and self-respect. Maw had put a red geranium on the table; there was the crispy fragrance of frying salt pork and soda biscuit in the air.

These the Hayneses! These people, with hope and self-esteem once more in their hearts! These people, with a new, a unique place in the community's respect! It was all like a beautiful miracle; and, thinking of its maker, Luke choked suddenly and gulped.

There was a moist spot on the old Mexican hairless right under his eyes; but it had been made by tears of pride, not sorrow. Maw was right! A hero's folks hadn't ought to cry. And he wouldn't. Nat was better off than ever—safe and honored. He had trod the path of glory. A line out of the boy's old Reader sprang to his mind: "The paths of glory lead but to the grave." Oh, but it wasn't true! Nat's path led to life—to hope; to help for all of them, for Nat's own. In his death, if not in his life, he had rehabilitated

them. And Nat—who loved them—would look down and call it good.

In spite of himself the boy sobbed, visioning his brother's face.

"Oh, Nat!" he whispered. "I knew you'd do it! I always said you'd do somethin' big for us all."

—Mary Brecht Pulver.

VIII

SERGT. WARREN COMES BACK FROM FRANCE

IMMEDIATELY after voting, the Rev. Jeremiah Soule stepped outside the town hall to fortify himself with fresh air for the coming meeting. Several others had done the same.

"Been a hard winter, Mr. Soule," politely remarked one of the loiterers about the door. He was clad for the gusts of March like a sealer about to venture forth upon an Arctic floe.

"And especially for the boys in the trenches," said the minister.

"That's a fact, sir. I didn't mean we'd ought to complain. We had our share of coal and wood, I guess, if the wood *was* green and the coal mostly slate."

"And we had the money to pay for it."

The group of men stirred a little uneasily.

"Honestly made, I think you'll admit that, sir," said Arthur Watts, a strapping fellow of thirty years, who had been called in the first draft and rejected on account of his poor teeth.

"I believe so—quite," admitted Mr. Soule. "We are making good rope for the government and our allies, and no one is better pleased over it than I. I'm proud of the cordage plant. Yes, since this dreadful war had to be, the town has come honestly enough by its prosperity."

The group felt that Mr. Soule had tactfully dodged the real issue, and they were content to have it so. Just then the polls were closed, and those who had brought lunch boxes proceeded to consume the contents. Others presented themselves at the anteroom, where George Bassett was dispensing his famous chowder and coffee, together with pickles and bread and butter.

"It frets the parson to see us keeping our money instead of blowing it all out in charity," remarked Watts, across a steaming mug of strong coffee. He laughed indulgently.

His friends did not echo his amusement. They looked, if not exactly ill at ease, at any rate somewhat sober.

The hall was packed when Joel Holmes, a massive and imperturbable person, was chosen moderator for the tenth successive time. Warrant in one large hand and gavel in the other, he inscrutably stared upon the expectant voters for a weighty minute.

"The meeting will please come to order," he announced. The gavel smote the desk resoundingly.

As usual, the first person to be recognized was fiery little Mr. Abel Crabbe, who had a few withering remarks to make concerning the warrant as a whole. He was greatly applauded. As a conscientious objector to everything, Abel was looked upon as an interesting feature of town meeting.

A number of articles were then discussed and disposed of without excitement until Henry Torrey rose. He was as much of an objector as Mr. Crabbe, but he dealt in irony rather than in blunt scorn. With a grim

smile he proceeded to ridicule the library directors. When he had exposed them in their true colors, he made an impassioned motion to halve the appropriation they asked for in Article 6 of the warrant.

The motion was enthusiastically seconded, but on being put to vote Torrey's was the only ay. The crowd enjoyed Torrey as they enjoyed Abel Crabbe, but they had perfect faith in the library directors, the town officers and the warrant.

Early in the proceedings it was evident that Article No. 10 was to furnish the event of the day. It ran as follows:

"That the sum of $25,000 be appropriated for the improvement and embellishment of Farragut Square, said improvement to include the removal of the four old buildings now abutting upon it, the erection of a flagpole and a suitable band stand and the widening of Brig Street on the bay side of the square."

When the article was reached, no disposition was shown to dispose of it quickly. Fenville wished to hear the report of the committee and the opinions and impressions of each and every member thereon. The plan had caught the popular fancy. Nearly every man there was ready to back it firmly, even boastfully.

Pompous Mr. Baxter, the chairman of the committee, sounded the keynote. He sketched the history of the cordage plant, which had begun as an unaspiring rope-walk. He compared it to the ugly duckling that became a regal swan. And the swan, he said, pursuing the simile, had not flown out of their hands in spite of the great wings it had grown.

At this point the moderator's voice and gavel were called upon to quell a disturbance in the rear of the hall apparently occasioned by the entrance of some late arrivals.

When order was restored Mr. Baxter, continuing the pæan to the town's prosperity, spoke of the uniquely local character of the cordage plant; of the fact that virtually everyone, from the president down to the office boy, concerned with it was a native of Fenville. And besides a liberal salary everyone had a share in the profits. Nearly every penny of the stock was owned right in the town of Fenville. All of which was no news, but everyone relished Baxter's glowing phrases just the same.

The speeches of the other committeemen were in the same tenor. Fenville had made money out of its cordage; was still making money. It could afford to pat its own back, and the pat might well take the form of a renovated and beautified town square that would advertise its business smartness to all beholders.

As the last of the committeemen sat down, some one in the rear of the hall addressed the moderator.

"Mr. ——?" queried that official, unable to see the speaker clearly. Like the old hall, recently destroyed by fire, the new structure had made a concession to the fair and inquisitive sex in the shape of a deep rear balcony.

"Warren—Miles Warren."

An excited craning of heads followed, and even Joel Holmes showed the human being beneath the armor of officialdom.

"Miles Warren!" he ejaculated. Then his gavel mechanically reminded him of his duties and he recalled the meeting to order. It took vigorous rapping to still the persistent murmurs and the eager turnings.

"I'd like to say a few words about Article 10," said the man under the low balcony.

"Well, I guess you can!" boomed the moderator. He was preserving his self-control with difficulty. His hands fidgeted and his circular face showed a deepening crimson. "But we can't hear what you say way back there—or see you, either," he added. "Please step a little farther forward if you will, Mr. Warren."

The storm of welcoming applause for the son who had so unexpectedly returned to his native town after two years of splendid service in the far-famed Foreign Legion suddenly fell to a shocked silence. They saw now why Sergt. Warren had come home. His father stood beside him. Miles needed some one to guide him up the narrow aisle—for he was blind.

Fenville had heard of the metal cross pinned to the faded tunic and had shared the pride of John Warren and his wife, Abigail; but it had not heard of the scarred face and sightless eyes. Miles had gone forth to fight for democracy "like a true knight of old," the Fenville Weekly Gazette had said. The townspeople had not smiled at the phrase, for there had always been something gallant in Miles; he had always had a fearless and honorable outlook upon life.

"I'm not much use to them over there, so it seems good to get home," he said. "And on town-meeting

day. I knew father wanted to be here, and I did, too, so we came right over from the depot."

Sightless: thrown back into the discard. But there was the same firm mouth and the same upright carriage of the well-shaped head. Broken? Not a bit of it. Everyone could see that. The old spirit was there, just as gallant as when he had set out for the battlefields of France.

"This Article No. 10," continued the sergeant. "You don't know how strange it sounds. Because I've come straight home from over there, you know. I was going to say, without seeing anything on the way." He smiled. "And that's true, too. What I mean is, I haven't had time to get adjusted to the change. It wasn't till just now that I said to myself, the war's thousands of miles off, way across the ocean. Not that the ocean would stop Fritz from getting at us mighty quick if he ever beats us over there. You may depend on that.

"Some one has to make the things that are needed and get paid for them. That's of course. But I haven't been seeing that side. I've been seeing France and England and our own boys with their backs to the wall. I've been seeing new graveyards grow; bigger than big towns—as big as cities. And cities that were nothing but graveyards. Towns that were nothing but ash heaps. Rich lands churned up into terrible deserts.

"And I've met men—met them all the time—who'd been seeing the same and worse in Russia and Poland, Serbia and Roumania—the whole Christian world being battered and ripped to pieces.

"That is the way you think about it over there. What can you do to stop it—how can you help the millions that have lost their fathers or mothers, husbands or wives, or children—that have no food or homes or country? That is what you ask yourself day and night.

"You can never give them back what they have lost. But if you had money, you could keep some of them from dying of cold and hunger; little children at least. That is about all money means to you over there.

"So when I come home to hear that Fenville has grown rich, why, I can't seem to sense it! And that you want to fix up Farragut Square,—make it pretty,—buy the town a kind of decoration because it has been lucky enough and smart enough to make money—out of the war. It's like blood money to me—like blood itself; a drop for every penny."

Fenville had never tolerated criticism, but the man in the faded uniform with the cross on his tunic and his head up, and his poor, blind, scarred face, exerted a strange influence over the audience. Even the least imaginative man had his vision of what that figure symbolized.

"It was looking at him, as much as hearing him speak—why, I seemed to get a sight right over to France as clear as if I had been there," explained Mr. Totten afterwards. "France made Farragut Square look kind of small."

"I'll say just one thing more," Miles went on, and you could have heard a pin drop in that hall. "If any

of our boys don't come back,—Lem Chapman and Frank Keeler and the others,—those that do, will they think a prettified Farragut Square is the best monument for the ones who died for us over there?"

The sergeant turned, and John Warren took hold of his arm to lead him back. Mr. Chapman, Lem's father, was up like a flash.

"Hold on!" he shouted. "No, it ain't, by Jupiter!"

Crash! Out came the handclapping like the rattle of rifle fire. More than one shrewd old eye was moist, and few were the hearts that did not beat with a more generous quickness.

"What can we do, Sergt. Miles?" asked Mr. Chapman. "You have told us what we shouldn't do, and I for one thank you for it. We want to do the right thing. Every man of us here does. Tell us what it is."

"Let us dispose of Article 10 first," said Dr. Shepard. The house approved, and Mr. Chapman gave way. The article was put in the form of a motion, was voted upon, and defeated as if it had never had a friend in the world.

"Make a motion, Miles!" shouted a score of voices.

"Do you want to know what I should do?" said the soldier. "There are places in France and Belgium that used to be towns. Some haven't even the cellars left. An American society has been formed to take hold of the work of building up those places after the war. We could write to that society and get the name of a town that once was—a little one; one where perhaps our own boys have fought. Fenville could put the

money she meant to spend on herself into helping to make it a town again. It would help, don't you worry about that. So Fenville could feel, always, long after our time, that that little French town was her *camarade*. And it would be her bit; Fenville's bit."

When he could make himself heard, the Rev. Jeremiah Soule made a motion, the gist of which was that a committee be appointed to correspond with the society with the object of learning the name of some small devastated town in France or Belgium that would be a worthy recipient of twenty-five thousand dollars from Fenville's treasury, the same to be expended toward rebuilding the town at the end of the war.

A dozen voices seconded the motion, and on being put to vote it was carried unanimously. Mr. Crabbe, the conscientious objector, was one of the first to rise on the ay vote. The fiery little man had his streak of sentiment, after all.

So had Henry Torrey, who said gruffly that he was glad to see the town's money spent for a really useful purpose for once.

"Three cheers for Sergt. Warren, then!" shouted Mr. Chapman. "And make them rousers!"

"He and John went out," said a voice in the rear of the hall.

"Cheer him from the steps!" cried another.

The crowd filed out. The two Warrens were walking down the road. The sergeant had his father's arm; but his head was up, and it was not he, but the older man, that had the air of being led. For some reason the crowd fell silent.

Finally some one said crisply, "Miles Warren always could see straight. And I tell you he can see as straight's ever, even if he is blind."

—Fisher Ames, Jr.

IX

THE COWARD

We will call him Albert Lloyd. That wasn't his name, but it will do:

Albert Lloyd was what the world terms a coward.

In London they called him a slacker.

His country had been at war nearly eighteen months, and still he was not in khaki.

He had no good reason for not enlisting, being alone in the world, having been educated in an Orphan Asylum, and there being no one dependent upon him for support. He had no good position to lose, and there was no sweetheart to tell him with her lips to go, while her eyes pleaded for him to stay.

Every time he saw a recruiting sergeant, he'd slink around the corner out of sight, with a terrible fear gnawing at his heart. When passing the big recruiting posters, and on his way to business and back he passed many, he would pull down his cap and look the other way, to get away from that awful finger pointing at him, under the caption, "Your King and Country Need You"; or the boring eyes of Kitchener, which burned into his very soul, causing him to shudder.

Then the Zeppelin raids—during them, he used to crouch in a corner of his boarding-house cellar, whimpering like a whipped puppy and calling upon the Lord to protect him.

Even his landlady despised him, although she had to admit that he was "good pay."

He very seldom read the papers, but one momentous morning, the landlady put the morning paper at his place before he came down to breakfast. Taking his seat, he read the flaring headline,"Conscription Bill Passed," and nearly fainted. Excusing himself, he stumbled upstairs to his bedroom, with the horror of it gnawing into his vitals.

Having saved up a few pounds, he decided not to leave the house, and to sham sickness, so he stayed in his room and had the landlady serve his meals there.

Every time there was a knock at the door, he trembled all over, imagining it was a policeman who had come to take him away to the army.

One morning his fears were realized. Sure enough there stood a policeman with the fatal paper. Taking it in his trembling hand, he read that he, Albert Lloyd, was ordered to report himself to the nearest recruiting station for physical examination. He reported immediately, because he was afraid to disobey.

The doctor looked with approval upon Lloyd's six feet of physical perfection, and thought what a fine guardsman he would make, but examined his heart twice before he passed him as "physically fit"; it was beating so fast.

From the recruiting depot Lloyd was taken, with many others, in charge of a sergeant, to the training depot at Aldershot, where he was given an outfit of khaki, and drew his other equipment. He made a

fine-looking soldier, except for the slight shrinking in his shoulders, and the hunted look in his eyes.

At the training depot it does not take long to find out a man's character, and Lloyd was promptly dubbed "Windy." In the English Army, "windy" means cowardly.

The smallest recruit in the barracks looked on him with contempt, and was not slow to show it in many ways.

Lloyd was a good soldier, learned quickly, obeyed every order promptly, never groused at the hardest fatigues. He was afraid to. He lived in deadly fear of the officers and "Non-Coms" over him. They also despised him.

One morning about three months after his enlistment, Lloyd's company was paraded, and the names picked for the next draft to France were read. When his name was called, he did not step out smartly, two paces to the front, and answer cheerfully, "Here, sir," as the others did. He just fainted in ranks, and was carried to barracks amid the sneers of the rest.

That night was an agony of misery to him. He could not sleep. Just cried and whimpered in his bunk, because on the morrow the draft was to sail for France, where he would see death on all sides, and perhaps be killed himself. On the steamer, crossing the Channel, he would have jumped overboard to escape, but was afraid of drowning.

Arriving in France, he and the rest were huddled into cattle cars. On the side of each appeared in white letters, "Chevaux 8, Hommes 40." After hours of

bumping over the uneven French roadbeds they arrived at the training base of Rouen.

At this place they were put through a week's rigid training in trench warfare. On the morning of the eighth day, they paraded at ten o'clock, and were inspected and passed by General H——, then were marched to the Quartermaster's, to draw their gas helmets and trench equipment.

At four in the afternoon, they were again hustled into cattle cars. This time, the journey lasted two days. They disembarked at the town of Frévent, and could hear a distant dull booming. With knees shaking, Lloyd asked the Sergeant what the noise was, and nearly dropped when the Sergeant replied in a somewhat bored tone:

"Oh, them's the guns up the line. We'll be up there in a couple o' days or so. Don't worry, my laddie, you'll see more of 'em than you want before you get 'ome to Blighty again, that is, if you're lucky enough to get back. Now lend a hand there unloadin' them cars, and quit that everlastin' shakin'. I believe yer scared." The last with a contemptuous sneer.

They marched ten kilos, full pack, to a little dilapidated village, and the sound of the guns grew louder, constantly louder.

The village was full of soldiers who turned out to inspect the new draft, the men who were shortly to be their mates in the trenches, for they were going "up the line" on the morrow, to "take over" their certain sector of trenches.

The draft was paraded in front of Battalion Headquarters, and the men were assigned to companies.

Lloyd was the only man assigned to "D" Company. Perhaps the officer in charge of the draft had something to do with it, for he called Lloyd aside, and said:

"Lloyd, you are going to a new company. No one knows you. Your bed will be as you make it, so for God's sake, brace up and be a man. I think you have the stuff in you, my boy, so good-bye, and the best of luck to you."

The next day the battalion took over their part of the trenches. It happened to be a very quiet day. The artillery behind the lines was still, except for an occasional shell sent over to let the Germans know the gunners were not asleep.

In the darkness, in single file, the Company slowly wended their way down the communication trench to the front line. No one noticed Lloyd's white and drawn face.

After they had relieved the Company in the trenches, Lloyd, with two of the old company men, was put on guard in one of the traverses. Not a shot was fired from the German lines, and no one paid any attention to him crouched on the firing step.

On the first time in, a new recruit is not required to stand with his head "over the top." He only "sits it out," while the older men keep watch.

At about ten o'clock, all of a sudden, he thought hell had broken loose, and crouched and shivered up against the parapet. Shells started bursting, as he imagined, right in their trench, when in fact they were

landing about a hundred yards in rear of them, in the second lines.

One of the older men on guard, turning to his mate, said:

"There goes Fritz with those trench mortars again. It's about time our artillery 'taped' them, and sent over a few. Where's that blighter of a draft man gone to? There's his rifle leaning against the parapet. He must have legged it. Just keep your eye peeled, Dick, while I report it to the Sergeant. I wonder if the fool knows he can be shot for such tricks as leavin' his post."

Lloyd had gone. When the trench mortars opened up, a maddening terror seized him and he wanted to run, to get away from that horrible din, anywhere to safety. So quietly sneaking around the traverse, he came to the entrance of a communication trench, and ran madly and blindly down it, running into traverses, stumbling into muddy holes, and falling full length over trench grids.

Groping blindly, with his arms stretched out in front of him, he at last came out of the trench into the village, or what used to be a village, before the German artillery razed it.

Mixed with his fear, he had a peculiar sort of cunning, which whispered to him to avoid all sentries, because if they saw him he would be sent back to that awful destruction in the front line, and perhaps be killed or maimed. The thought made him shudder, the cold sweat coming out in beads on his face.

On his left, in the darkness, he could make out the

shadowy forms of trees; crawling on his hands and knees, stopping and crouching with fear at each shell-burst, he finally reached an old orchard, and cowered at the base of a shot-scarred apple-tree.

He remained there all night, listening to the sound of the guns and ever praying, praying that his useless life would be spared.

As dawn began to break, he could discern little dark objects protruding from the ground all about him. Curiosity mastered his fear and he crawled to one of the objects, and there, in the uncertain light, he read on a little wooden cross:

"Pte. H. S. Wheaton, No. 1670, 1st London Regt. R. F. Killed in action, April 25, 1916. R. I. P." (Rest in Peace).

When it dawned on him that he had been hiding all night in a cemetery, his reason seemed to leave him, and a mad desire to be free from it all made him rush madly away, falling over little wooden crosses, smashing some and trampling others under his feet.

In his flight, he came to an old French dugout, half caved in, and partially filled with slimy and filthy water.

Like a fox being chased by the hounds, he ducked into this hole, and threw himself on a pile of old empty sandbags, wet and mildewed. Then—unconsciousness.

On the next day, he came to; far distant voices sounded in his ears. Opening his eyes, in the entrance of the dugout he saw a Corporal and two men with fixed bayonets.

The Corporal was addressing him:

"Get up, you white-livered blighter! Curse you and the day you ever joined "D" Company, spoiling their fine record! It'll be you up against the wall, and a good job too. Get a hold of him, men, and if he makes a break, give him the bayonet, and send it home, the cowardly sneak. Come on, you, move, we've been looking for you long enough."

Lloyd, trembling and weakened by his long fast, tottered out, assisted by a soldier on each side of him.

They took him before the Captain, but could get nothing out of him but:

"For God's sake, sir, don't have me shot, don't have me shot!"

The Captain, utterly disgusted with him, sent him under escort to Division Headquarters for trial by court-martial, charged with desertion under fire.

They shoot deserters in France.

During his trial, Lloyd sat as one dazed, and could put nothing forward in his defense, only an occasional "Don't have me shot!"

His sentence was passed: "To be shot at 3:38 o'clock on the morning of May 18, 1916." This meant that he had only one more day to live.

He did not realize the awfulness of his sentence, his brain seemed paralyzed. He knew nothing of his trip, under guard, in a motor lorry to the sand-bagged guardroom in the village, where he was dumped on the floor and left, while a sentry with a fixed bayonet paced up and down in front of the entrance.

Bully beef, water, and biscuits were left beside him for his supper.

The sentry, seeing that he ate nothing, came inside and shook him by the shoulder, saying in a kind voice:

"Cheero, laddie, better eat something. You'll feel better. Don't give up hope. You'll be pardoned before morning. I know the way they run these things. They're only trying to scare you, that's all. Come now, that's a good lad, eat something. It'll make the world look different to you."

The good-hearted sentry knew he was lying about the pardon. He knew nothing short of a miracle could save the poor lad.

Lloyd listened eagerly to his sentry's words, and believed them. A look of hope came into his eyes, and he ravenously ate the meal beside him.

In about an hour's time, the Chaplain came to see him, but Lloyd would have none of him. He wanted no parson; he was to be pardoned.

The artillery behind the lines suddenly opened up with everything they had. An intense bombardment of the enemy's lines had commenced. The roar of the guns was deafening. Lloyd's fears came back with a rush, and he cowered on the earthen floor with his hands over his face.

The sentry, seeing his position, came in and tried to cheer him by talking to him:

"Never mind them guns, boy, they won't hurt you. They are ours. We are giving the 'Boches' a dose of their own medicine. Our boys are going over the top at dawn of the morning to take their trenches. We'll

give 'em a taste of cold steel with their sausages and beer. You just sit tight now until they relieve you. I'll have to go now, lad, as it's nearly time for my relief, and I don't want them to see me a-talkin' with you. So long, laddie, cheero."

With this, the sentry resumed the pacing of his post. In about ten minutes' time he was relieved, and a "D" Company man took his place.

Looking into the guardhouse, the sentry noticed the cowering attitude of Lloyd, and, with a sneer, said to him:

"Instead of whimpering in that corner, you ought to be saying your prayers. It's bally conscripts like you what's spoilin' our record. We've been out here nigh onto eighteen months, and you're the first man to desert his post. The whole Battalion is laughin' and pokin' fun at 'D' Company, bad luck to you! but you won't get another chance to disgrace us. They'll put your lights out in the mornin'."

After listening to this tirade, Lloyd, in a faltering voice, asked: "They are not going to shoot me, are they? Why, the other sentry said they'd pardon me. For God's sake—don't tell me I'm to be shot!" and his voice died away in a sob.

"Of course, they're going to shoot you. The other sentry was jest a-kiddin' you. Jest like old Smith. Always a-tryin' to cheer some one. You ain't got no more chance o' bein' pardoned than I have of gettin' to be Colonel of my 'Batt.'"

When the fact that all hope was gone finally entered Lloyd's brain, a calm seemed to settle over him, and

rising to his knees, with his arms stretched out to heaven, he prayed, and all of his soul entered into the prayer:

"Oh, good and merciful God, give me strength to die like a man! Deliver me from this coward's death. Give me a chance to die like my mates in the fighting line, to die fighting for my country. I ask this of thee."

A peace, hitherto unknown, came to him, and he crouched and cowered no more, but calmly waited the dawn, ready to go to his death. The shells were bursting all around the guardroom, but he hardly noticed them.

While waiting there, the voice of the sentry, singing in a low tone, came to him. He was singing the chorus of the popular trench ditty:

"I want to go home, I want to go home.
"I don't want to go to the trenches no more.
Where the 'whizzbangs' and 'sausages' roar galore.
Take me over the sea, where the Allemand can't get at me.
Oh my, I don't want to die! I want to go home."

Lloyd listened to the words with a strange interest, and wondered what kind of a home he would go to across the Great Divide. It would be the only home he had ever known.

Suddenly there came a great rushing through the air, a blinding flash, a deafening report, and the sandbag walls of the guardroom toppled over, and then—blackness.

When Lloyd recovered consciousness, he was lying on his right side, facing what used to be the entrance

of the guardroom. Now, it was only a jumble of rent and torn sandbags. His head seemed bursting. He slowly rose on his elbow, and there in the east the dawn was breaking. But what was that mangled shape lying over there among the sandbags? Slowly dragging himself to it, he saw the body of the sentry. One look was enough to know that he was dead. The sentry had had his wish gratified. He had "gone home." He was safe at last from the "whizzbangs" and the Allemand.

Like a flash it came to Lloyd that he was free. Free to go "over the top" with his Company. Free to die like a true Briton fighting for his King and Country. A great gladness and warmth came over him. Carefully stepping over the body of the sentry, he started on a mad race down the ruined street of the village, amid the bursting shells, minding them not, dodging through or around hurrying platoons on their way to also go "over the top." Coming to a communication trench he could not get through. It was blocked with laughing, cheering, and cursing soldiers. Climbing out of the trench, he ran wildly along the top, never heeding the rain of machine-gun bullets and shells, not even hearing the shouts of the officers, telling him to get back into the trench. He was going to join his Company who were in the front line. He was going to *fight* with them. He, the despised coward, had come into his own.

While he was racing along, jumping over trenches crowded with soldiers, a ringing cheer broke out all along the front line, and his heart sank. He knew he

was too late. His Company had gone over. But still he ran madly. He would catch them. He would die with them.

Meanwhile his Company had gone "over." They, with the other companies had taken the first and second German trenches, and had pushed steadily on to the third line. "D" Company, led by their Captain, the one who had sent Lloyd to Division Headquarters for trial, charged with desertion, had pushed steadily forward until they found themselves far in advance of the rest of the attacking force. "Bombing out" trench after trench, and using their bayonets, they came to a German communication trench, which ended in a blindsap, and then the Captain, and what was left of his men, knew they were in a trap. They would not retire. "D" Company never retired, and they were "D" Company. Right in front of them they could see hundreds of Germans preparing to rush them with bomb and bayonet. They would have some chance if ammunition and bombs could reach them from the rear. Their supply was exhausted, and the men realized it would be a case of dying as bravely as possible, or making a run for it. But "D" Company would not run. It was against their traditions and principles.

The Germans would have to advance across an open space of three to four hundred yards before they could get within bombing distance of the trench, and then it would be all their own way.

Turning to his Company, the Captain said:

"Men, it's a case of going West for us. We are out

of ammunition and bombs, and the 'Boches' have us in a trap. They will bomb us out. Our bayonets are useless here. We will have to go over and meet them, and it's a case of thirty to one, so send every thrust home, and die like the men of 'D' Company should. When I give the word, follow me, and up and at them. If we only had a machine gun, we could wipe them out! Here they come, get ready, men."

Just as he finished speaking, the welcome "pup-pup" of a machine gun in their rear rang out, and the front line of the onrushing Germans seemed to melt away. They wavered, but once again came rushing onward. Down went their second line. The machine gun was taking an awful toll of lives. Then again they tried to advance, but the machine gun mowed them down. Dropping their rifles and bombs, they broke and fled in a wild rush back to their trench, amid the cheers of "D" Company. They were forming again for another attempt, when in the rear of "D" Company came a mighty cheer. The ammunition had arrived and with it a battalion of Scotch to reinforce them. They were saved. The unknown machine gunner had come to the rescue in the nick of time.

With the reinforcements, it was an easy task to take the third German line.

After the attack was over, the Captain and three of his non-commissioned officers, wended their way back to the position where the machine gun had done its deadly work. He wanted to thank the gunner in the name of "D" Company for his magnificent deed.

They arrived at the gun, and an awful sight met their eyes.

Lloyd had reached the front line trench, after his Company had left it. A strange company was nimbly crawling up the trench ladders. They were reinforce ments going over. They were Scotties, and they made a magnificent sight in their brightly colored kilts and bare knees.

Jumping over the trench, Lloyd raced across "No Man's Land," unheeding the rain of bullets, leaping over dark forms on the ground, some of which lay still, while others called out to him as he speeded past.

He came to the German front line, but it was deserted, except for heaps of dead and wounded—a grim tribute to the work of *his* Company, good old "D" Company. Leaping trenches, and gasping for breath, Lloyd could see right ahead of him *his* Company in a dead-ended sap of a communication trench, and across the open, away in front of them, a mass of Germans preparing for a charge. Why didn't "D" Company fire on them? Why were they so strangely silent? What were they waiting for? Then he knew—their ammunition was exhausted.

But what was that on his right? A machine gun. Why didn't it open fire and save them? He would make that gun's crew do their duty. Rushing over to the gun, he saw why it had not opened fire. Scattered around its base lay six still forms. They had brought their gun to consolidate the captured position, but a German machine gun had decreed they would never fire again.

Lloyd rushed to the gun, and grasping the travers-

ing handles, trained it on the Germans. He pressed the thumb piece, but only a sharp click was the result. The gun was unloaded. Then he realized his helplessness. He did not know how to load the gun. Oh, why hadn't he attended the machine-gun course in England? He'd been offered the chance, but with a blush of shame he remembered that he had been afraid. The nickname of the machine gunners had frightened him. They were called the "Suicide Club." Now, because of this fear, his Company would be destroyed, the men of "D" Company would have to die, because he, Albert Lloyd, had been afraid of a name. In his shame he cried like a baby. Anyway he could die with them, and, rising to his feet, he stumbled over the body of one of the gunners, who emitted a faint moan. A gleam of hope flashed through him. Perhaps this man could tell him how to load the gun. Stooping over the body, he gently shook it, and the soldier opened his eyes. Seeing Lloyd, he closed them again, and in a faint voice said:

"Get away, you blighter, leave me alone. I don't want any coward around me."

The words cut Lloyd like a knife, but he was desperate. Taking the revolver out of the holster of the dying man, he pressed the cold muzzle to the soldier's head, and replied:

"Yes, it is Lloyd, the coward of Company 'D,' but if you don't tell me how to load that gun, I'll put a bullet through your brain!"

A sunny smile came over the countenance of the dying man, and he said in a faint whisper:

"Good old boy! I knew you wouldn't disgrace our Company——"

Lloyd interposed, "For God's sake, if you want to save that Company you are so proud of, tell me how to load that gun!"

As if reciting a lesson in school, the soldier replied in a weak, singsong voice: "Insert tag end of belt in feed block, with left hand pull belt left front. Pull crank handle back on roller, let go, and repeat motion. Gun is now loaded. To fire, raise automatic safety latch, and press thumb piece. Gun is now firing. If gun stops, ascertain position of crank handle——"

But Lloyd waited for no more. With wild joy at his heart, he took a belt from one of the ammunition boxes lying beside the gun, and followed the dying man's instructions. Then he pressed the thumb piece, and a burst of fire rewarded his efforts. The gun was working.

Training it on the Germans, he shouted for joy as their front rank went down.

Traversing the gun back and forth along the mass of Germans, he saw them break and run back to the cover of their trench, leaving their dead and wounded behind. He had saved his Company, he, Lloyd, the coward, had "done his bit." Releasing the thumb piece, he looked at the watch on his wrist. He was still alive, and the hands pointed to "3:38," the time set for his death by the court.

"Ping!"—a bullet sang through the air, and Lloyd fell forward across the gun.

The sentence of the court had been "duly carried out."

The Captain slowly raised the limp form drooping over the gun, and, wiping the blood from the white face, recognized it as Lloyd, the coward of "D" Company. Reverently covering the face with his handkerchief, he turned to his "non-coms," and in a voice husky with emotion, addressed them:

"Boys, it's Lloyd the deserter. He has redeemed himself, died the death of a hero. Died that his mates might live."

—Arthur Guy Empey.

X

CHÂTEAU-THIERRY

WHEN the United States of America finally declared war against His Satanic Majesty, Wilhelm of Prussia, Carter nodded his approval. The nation's decision was reached at a time when he was in a particularly generous mood, for things had been coming his way for some time and he had finally settled down comfortably to enjoy them. In the preceding fall he had reached the goal of his ambition, the managership of the New York office of the Atlas Company, where he had been employed for twenty-five years. This carried a salary of seventy-five hundred—some jump from the petty twelve hundred on which he had started; even some jump from the forty-five hundred he had been drawing for the past year.

The increase allowed Carter to make several very satisfactory changes: first, to move from the rented house in Edgemere, where he had lived for five years, to a house of his own in the same town, for which he gave a warranty deed to his wife; to take his son Ben out of a commercial school and send him to Harvard for a liberal education; and to purchase a classy little runabout. There were certain other perquisites, too, which made the world a better place to live in, such as an added servant, a finer table, and, finally, the

privilege of taking the eight-ten to town instead of the seven-fifteen.

Carter enjoyed all these luxuries as only a man can who has worked hard for them and waited long. He had promised them to his pretty wife the day he married her, and now, after twenty years, he had made good. It was worth something to see him, after a substantial breakfast, kiss Kitty good-by on the front porch, give a proprietary look at the neat shingled house, and stroll down the gravelly path at a leisurely pace, stopping at the gate to light a fat cigar and wave a second adieu to the little woman, who was still pretty and who he knew admired him from the crown of his head to the tips of his shoes. She was that kind.

On the eight-ten he was meeting a new class of neighbors—all eight to ten thousand dollar men, with a few above that figure, though the latter generally moved to the Heights at round twelve thousand. They were men whose lives were now polished and round like stones on the seashore within reach of the waves. They varied, mostly, in their dimensions, with of course some differences of political coloring. But they were fast becoming neutral even in politics. With America at war the old issues were disappearing.

Most of the men had long since become used to each other, but Carter, sitting in the smoker—it was almost like a private car reserved for those not due at their offices until nine—was actually thrilled by his associates. And if ever he found an opportunity to refer among them to "my son at Harvard" he was puffed up all the rest of the day. The only thing he regretted

was that the war had done away with football, because in high school the lad had promised to make a name for himself in the game. Still, even that had its redeeming features: his neck was safe. Though the boy was climbing toward six feet and weighed, at eighteen, round one hundred and seventy, he threw himself into the line in those final school games with a recklessness that made Carter, looking on, catch his breath.

Carter had not been able to keep pace with the boy's physical growth. It still seemed to him but a brief time ago that he had been carrying him round in his arms as a baby. And he had carried him for miles. He had not been able to keep his hands off him. He had loved to feel the downy head against his cheek and the frightened little heart pounding against his own. Night after night he had walked the floor with him with a sense of creation akin to God's. And when anything was really the matter with the child Carter became a trembling wreck.

Well, those days were something to look back upon now with a smile. They even played their part in the present. They afforded the contrast necessary to allow him to extract to the last drop his final triumphant success. Some of those who had never taken the seven-fifteen did not know what it meant to take the eight-ten.

Carter, who had previously been content with one paper, now bought the *Times* and the *Sun* at the station and glanced through the headlines. He had read with a thrill of pride, as did everyone in the whole car on that early spring morning, the President's declaration of war.

He was sitting beside Culver, of the Second National

Bank, and exclaimed: "Guess that'll make Wilhelm sit up and take notice, eh?"

Culver was an older man. Carter could have punched him for his response in a level voice: "Yes. But 'tis going to make us sit up and take notice, too."

"What do you mean?" demanded Carter with a trace of aggressiveness.

"I mean that our resources are going to be tested to the limit before we're through with this."

"You wait until the Huns see Uncle Sam with his sleeves rolled up. Wouldn't surprise me any if they quit."

Carter shifted his seat to a place near Barclay and Newell, who were leading a group in three cheers for the President. And on his way downtown that day he stopped to buy a flag and pole to be sent to the house. Before he reached his office these flags of red and white and blue had begun to appear in numbers on the tops of buildings and from windows, brightening the dull gray backgrounds as with flowers. It made him want to cheer. It made him walk more erect. The whole downtown atmosphere became vibrant. The declaration of war was the sole topic of conversation in the office, and one of the first things he did was to ring up Kitty and tell her about it.

"Well, old girl, we've done it!" he exclaimed.

"Done what?" she asked anxiously.

"Declared war," he announced, as though in some way he had been personally concerned in the act. "Guess that will make the Huns rub their eyes."

"War?" trembled Kitty.

"You bet! Fritzie waited a little too long with his apologies that last time."

In the succeeding days Carter followed the nation's preparations for the task ahead with a feeling of reflected glory. His favorite phrase was: "We're going at it man-fashion."

He was keen for conscription and liked to speak of a possible army of two million. When the First Liberty Loan came along he subscribed for a thousand dollars. He would have taken more, but he found that his personal expenses had taken in the last few months a decided jump. It was costing him more than twice as much to maintain his new house as it had his old. Besides that, Ben's expenses at college were a considerable item. His car, too, was costing more than he had anticipated, and he had added unconsciously a lot to his everyday expenditures. He was smoking better cigars, eating better lunches and wearing better clothes. At the same time each one of these items was costing more. However, his new position in a way called for these things, and, besides, he was entitled to them. He had worked hard for them and they were the fair reward of attainment.

Carter had hoped to do better on the Second Liberty Loan, but when the time came he found it difficult to take out even another thousand. He rather resented the way Newell, the overzealous member of the local committee, harried him about it. When Newell suggested that he double the amount the man was presuming to know Carter's circumstances better than he himself knew them.

He had answered rather tartly:

"I'm capable of deciding my investments for myself."

In the interval between the two loans both the servants had asked for an increase in wages, and Carter had been forced to pay it or see them go. Kitty had suggested that she be allowed to get along with one and undertake some of the housework herself, but he had set his foot down on that.

"You've had your share of housework, little woman," he said. "It's time you took a rest and enjoyed yourself."

But the servants were not the only ones who held Carter up. The grocer, the butcher and the iceman all conspired against him. When the Government began to take control under Hoover and fix prices for some of the essentials Carter was outspoken in his approval.

"It's time something of the sort was done to check the food pirates," he declared to Culver.

"Where's this government control going to stop?" questioned the latter.

"I don't know and I don't care," replied Carter aggressively.

"It's a type of paternalism, and that's dangerous," suggested Culver.

Carter replied with a glittering generality: "Your Uncle Sam has rolled up his shirt sleeves and means business."

Carter always chuckled contentedly over the cartoons of the tall, lank figure with the lean face, grimly

set jaws and starred top hat. It expressed for him in a human way his own patriotism. It filled him with pride and gave him confidence. It satisfied his traditional conception of Americanism. He even saw in the face a reflection of his own ancestors who had fought at Bunker Hill and through the Civil War. It was distinctly New England, but New England was still in his mind distinctly America.

And yet Carter was puzzled at first when he read the names appearing in the final draft lists—puzzled and a bit worried. These names were not like those that were signed to the Declaration of Independence or those who fell at Bunker Hill. Decidedly they were more like those found in to-day's New York directory. This might have been expected, and yet it gave Carter something of a shock until one afternoon he saw a regiment of khaki-clad men marching down Fifth Avenue. Then he felt a lump in his throat that prevented him from cheering as loud as he wished. In uniform and marching to the stirring music of a military band these men were, every mother's son of them, Americans. He saw the same lean faces, the same lank, sinewy bodies, the same clear eyes and set jaws. Their lips were sealed, so that it did not matter what language they spoke. In khaki they were all Americans—the same who fought at Bunker Hill.

The sight sent Carter home with a renewed enthusiasm, which helped him survive the shock of the news that the cook had, without notice, packed up her trunk and left to take some sort of job in a factory. But fortunately he had brought along with him a

sirloin steak, which, broiled, made a very satisfactory dinner. A week later the second girl left.

Mrs. Carter took it good-humoredly, even with a certain amount of relief. She had turned to Red Cross work and one thing or another, but still she missed the care of her own home. Furthermore, she had been genuinely disturbed by the way the expenses had been creeping up. But Carter stormed round and spent half the next day trying to find some new girls. The agencies showed him a few old women and shook their heads.

"We can't compete with the factories," they said sadly.

"But, hang it all, what's a man going to do?" he inquired petulantly.

The agencies, perforce, left him to answer that for himself.

As a matter of fact Carter was not wholly unselfish in his desire to relieve his wife of the housework—particularly the culinary part of it. She did her conscientious best, but she had never been able satisfactorily to master the fine art of cooking. Possibly it was because she herself was more or less indifferent to what she ate. A slice of bread and a cup of tea were enough at any time to satisfy her, so that when she did cook it was always for him and without any other personal interest in the result. Sometimes she forgot; in fact, more often than not she forgot. Perhaps it was only some one little thing, like leaving the baking powder out of the biscuits or the sugar out of the pies. Or if she did get everything in, perhaps she failed to

remember in time that the mixture was in the oven. When she began fooling round with war recipes she found herself even more bewildered. Lord knows, it calls for deft fingers and inborn skill to make a good pie crust out of honest wheat flour, with all thought of economy thrown to the winds. It requires nothing short of genius to produce the same results with substitutes for everything except the apples.

She tried all one afternoon and created something that had a fairly good surface appearance. She waited anxiously until Carter tasted it, and then asked: "How do you like it, Ben?"

"You want the truth?" he returned.

"Of course there is no white flour in the crust, but ——"

"There isn't anything in it that ought to be in a pie," he declared. "It tastes to me as though it were made out of sawdust and motor oil."

He did not eat it. It might have been possible had he been starving, but he was in no such unfortunate condition. A man does not ask for apple pie because of its calory content, but because he wants apple pie. It is a matter of taste. A primary essential is, then, not that it shall look like apple pie, but that it shall have the flavor of apple pie. He had been fond of apple pie all his life, and it certainly seemed like an innocent enough addiction. That was equally true of doughnuts and coffee for breakfast. He had enjoyed them all his life until they had become an integral part of the morning meal. As a result of long practice Mrs. Carter had finally succeeded in perfecting herself

in the art of doughnut making. But now instead of frying them in fat, she began to use an excellent vegetable substitute. Not only that, but she followed this by using a sirup for the sugar, and using eighty per cent barley flour and twenty of wheat. She had been given the recipe by the local conservation board and been assured that the product was very satisfactory.

From the viewpoint of the conservation board that may have been true, but to Carter it was nothing short of criminal to allow these balls of fried barley flour to masquerade under the same name.

"Don't call 'em doughnuts," he growled, "'cause they aren't. Invent a new name for them."

"War doughnuts?" suggested Mrs. Carter anxiously.

"War nothing!" sputtered Carter. "They don't even belong to the same family."

Whereupon he turned to his coffee, sweetened with a new kind of sticky substance that tasted like an inferior grade of molasses. There were those who maintained that it was just as good as sugar for sweetening. They were liars—bold-faced liars or they had lost their sense of taste. They belonged to the same class as people who maintained that coffee was better without sugar—that so one enjoyed the taste of the native berry. One might just as well argue that flapjacks for the same reason were best without sirup; cake without frosting; bread without butter.

Carter found his breakfast spoiled for him at precisely the period in life when he was prepared most to enjoy his breakfast. This was extremely irritating. It sent him to the office every morning with a grouch

that did not wear off until toward noon, when it was renewed by having to pay twice what he should for a tasteless lunch. His cigars were the only thing that held up well in flavor, and he began to smoke too many of them.

Carter still followed each day's news of the nation's part in the great war with honest pride. He liked the big way his country was going about its preparations. He rolled the dramatic figures over his tongue and gloated over the scale of the various projects. Six hundred millions appropriated for airplanes!

"We'll show 'em," he announced to Culver. We'll have the air over there black with planes!"

And that job at Hog Island! They were planning to build fifty ways there inside of a year—just put them down on a marshy island.

"Nothing small about your Uncle Sam," he chuckled.

When the inevitable scandals began to be whispered and congressional investigations were started, Carter frowned.

"If these stories are true," he declared, "the grafters ought to be lynched; if they're not we ought to lynch the darn-fool congressmen who are interrupting the game."

The investigations took place, changes were made, and the work went on, with the investigations soon forgotten. Nothing could check the onward movement. Pershing landed in France, and soon was followed by his men. Work on the same gigantic scale was begun on the other side. Docks were built, railroads laid down overnight, warehouses put up almost between

dawn and twilight. This vanguard saw big and built big, and when the news of its accomplishment began to filter across to the men at home it made every American feel bigger.

At the close of his freshman year in June, Ben came back home, and that personal interest took the place of every other in Carter's mind. The boy was looking fine. Drill with the Harvard regiment had taken the place of athletics and had left him as rugged and tanned as a seasoned soldier. Carter proudly took the boy to town with him on the eight-ten and introduced him to the crowd. Then he introduced him to everyone in the office, including Stetson, the second vice president. There was some design in this. He was preparing the way for an opening here for Ben as soon as the lad was through college. With the benefit of the experience Carter could give him the boy ought to climb high in the Atlas.

Ben had acquired poise in this last year. He met these men with an assurance and charm of manner tempered with respectful deference that surprised his father. It was clear that the boy made a very pleasant impression.

At lunch Ben repeated to his father some of the experiences he had heard from college mates who had gone over to drive ambulances. The boy was full of it and his cheeks grew flushed as he talked. Carter became disturbed.

"That's all very well," broke in Carter; "but those fellows might have made themselves more useful if they had waited until they were of age. Both President

Lowell and the War Department are advising men to wait and finish their college courses, aren't they?"

"Yes," admitted Ben; "they advise that."

"Well, it's sound advice," declared Carter. "A man with a college education and Plattsburg on top of that is worth twenty ambulance drivers. Officers are what we need."

"I suppose so," agreed Ben abstractedly.

The reply left Carter more comfortable. The boy was only just nineteen, and that gave him two more years before he was twenty-one. By that time the war would be over. Carter was sure of it. The nation by then would be in full stride, and when that time came that was to be the end Of course, if by any chance the war should be prolonged—why, then the boy would have to go. But that contingency was two years off—two long years off. In the meanwhile the boy could feel that he was getting his training. He was going to make a better officer for waiting. He would gain in experience and judgment—two most necessary qualifications for an officer. Carter proceeded to enlarge on that subject. But the boy listened indifferently. Carter's position, however, was sound, and the more he talked the more he convinced himself of this, so that he succeeded in putting himself enough at ease to talk of the war in a general way.

"Sort of makes a man glad he's an American to be living in these days, eh, Ben?"

"You bet!" nodded Ben.

"The rest of the world thought we'd gone soft, but your old Uncle Sam has shown that he still has fighting

stuff in him. It took us some time to get stirred up, but once started—woof!"

"We've got a big job on our hands," said Ben.

"The bigger the better," declared Carter. "It takes a big job to wake us up."

The boy was surprised and encouraged by his father's aggressive attitude, and yet when he ventured to reintroduce the subject of ambulance service he saw his father shy off again. He was puzzled by this and went away after lunch to meet his chum Stanley.

A week later, as Carter was about to settle down on the front porch for an after-dinner smoke, Ben came along, took his arm and led him down the graveled path toward the road—out of sight of the house, where Mrs. Carter was washing the dishes. The boy kept his father's arm in an unusually demonstrative manner until he stopped beneath an electric light.

Then he asked quite casually: "Dad, got your fountain pen with you?"

"Eh?"

The lad held out a paper.

"What in thunder is this?" demanded Carter.

"My enlistment papers, dad. I went down to the Marine Recruiting Office the other day and passed my physical. Now—they've left a place along the dotted line for you to sign because I'm under age."

The thing that astonished Carter most after the initial shock was a feeling of helplessness. It was as though his relations with his son had suddenly changed and the son had become the father. He was a foot shorter than the boy anyway, and now he felt two feet

shorter. He saw a new light in the boy's eyes, heard a fresh note of dominance. And yet it was only a brief time ago—a pitifully brief time ago—that he had been holding this same boy in his arms as a baby. Now he stood at the lad's mercy, even though he still saw below the stalwart figure of the boy-man the downy-headed baby.

Carter gulped back a lump in his throat.

"Good Lord!" he choked. "I can't. I can't. You're all I've got."

The young man placed a steady hand upon his father's shoulder.

"You must take this thing right, dad," he said firmly.

"In another year——"

"I'd never forgive myself if I waited," cut in Ben. "I've heard too much from the fellows who've been over there and seen. I want you to understand that it isn't the adventure of the thing that gets me. It's the right of it. I'm strong enough for the game, and that's all that counts. Another year wouldn't make me any more fit."

"You'd be ready for Plattsburg—in a couple of years."

"Maybe," Ben nodded; "but somehow—well, I just hanker to use my arms and legs rather than my head. The way I feel, nothing short of a chance with the bayonet will satisfy me. That's why I went in for the Marines."

Carter glanced up. He saw those lips, which had once been so tender and soft, now sternly taut.

"Have you told your mother?" asked Carter.

"No, dad. I want it all settled first."

"I—I don't know what it will do to her," Carter struggled on feebly.

"She'll take it right," declared the boy with conviction. "She'll take it right because—because it's for women like her that we're going over there."

Carter did not reach for the paper, even then. He merely found it in his hands. He drew out his fountain pen and the name he scrawled upon the dotted line might have been written by a man of eighty.

"That's the good old dad," Ben whispered hoarsely as he replaced the paper in his pocket. "You're a brick."

Carter tried to see it that way. There were moments even when he thought he was going to feel proud. A day or two later, when Newell, Culver and the others on the eight-ten heard of it, they hurried up to him and shook his hand with such phrases as "The boy has the right stuff in him, Carter," and "He makes us glad we live in Edgemere." All Carter could do was to turn away.

The boy's going left a great big hollow place in Carter—a hollow that only grew bigger when he began to receive the lad's enthusiastic letters from the training camp. He missed him in a way that disturbed every detail of his daily life. When he woke up in the morning it was with a sense of some deep tragedy hanging over him—as though the boy were dead. This sent him downstairs depressed and irascible. His coffee with its abominable sirup tasted more bitter

than ever. The mere sight of the war doughnuts irritated him. It was as though they made mock of him. Half the time the omelet was burned, for Kitty was becoming more forgetful than ever, and more often than not did not remember the omelet at all until she smelled it smoking. She did her best to cheer Carter up, until she found the wisest thing to do was to say nothing. As a matter of fact everything she said sounded to him as hypocritical as all the confounded war substitutes with which he found himself more and more hemmed in. Newell particularly was full of new recipes for foods and drinks that he claimed were as good as the original articles, and was forever pulling clippings from his pockets on the morning train.

"You ought to get your wife to try this, Carter," he broke out one day. "It's a new recipe for cake without sugar, wheat or butter. Ellen made some last night and you couldn't tell it from the real stuff."

"What do you call the real stuff?" demanded Carter.

"Why, the cake we used to get before the war."

"And you mean to say you can't tell the difference?"

"Well, of course this isn't quite so tasty, but it's a darned good substitute."

"You're welcome," growled Carter.

Newell appeared astonished. Later he repeated the conversation to Manson, and concluded: "Do you know, if the beggar didn't have a boy in the Marines I'd say he was pro-German."

"Nonsense!" answered Manson.

"Well, he wasn't any too keen about the Second

Liberty Loan when I saw him. He only took a thousand."

"So? I thought he'd be good for five, anyway."

The Government was already beginning to talk about the Third Liberty Loan. Somewhat fretfully Carter read the preliminary announcements. Where was this thing going to stop, anyway? He was not any more than keeping even with the game now. And even so, he was not getting so much out of life as he had been getting before.

On top of that they sent the boy across. After an interval of silence Carter received a cable one day announcing his safe arrival at a port in France. It took the starch all out of him. It was like one of those nightmares he used to suffer when he dreamed of the boy in some great danger and was forced to stand by, dumb and paralyzed, powerless to help. It was like that exactly, only this was reality. Day by day and mile by mile this intangible merciless power called war was dragging the boy nearer and nearer his destruction. It was barbaric. It was wrong. This boy was his.

Now he was at a port in France. Until the last few years that would not have been anything to worry about. He had wished the boy to travel. France had always stood to Carter as a land of sunshine and holidays—a sort of pre-honeymoon land to the more fortunate. To-day a port in France seemed like a port in hell.

On the eight-ten they kept asking about the boy, and when Carter told Barclay that Ben was over

there, Barclay answered: "Lucky dog. That ought to make you proud."

Carter made no reply. That was in March, just before the big Hun offensive. When that broke Carter did not dare read the papers for a while. Those were bad days. America had then been in the war nearly a year, and yet it was possible for those gray hordes to dash at and into the allied lines. They did it again and again, until the world stood aghast and Carter himself stood aghast. It made no difference whether he read the papers or not, for hourly bulletins were passed round the office and scarcely anything else was talked of.

America had been in the war nearly a year. Uncle Sam had appropriated billions upon billions of dollars; had built shipyards the size of which staggered belief; had talked of destroyers and airplanes in terms of thousands; had established vast military camps and already drafted millions of men; had turned almost every industry in the country over to war work; had taken over the railroads and whatever else was needed.

Uncle Sam had been working with his jaws set and his sleeves rolled up and flags flying from almost every housetop between the Atlantic and the Pacific; with men marching down the streets and bands playing and half the politicians of the country turned into Fourth of July orators.

Yet this thing was happening over there. Lines that had been thought impregnable were falling daily. City after city was being overrun. If the Huns paused it was only for breath, and to dash on once more. Nearer

and nearer they came to Paris, until the city heard the sound of their guns; nearer and nearer, until they came to Château-Thierry.

Carter reached a point where almost his faith in God was shaken. He did not know exactly just what his faith in God was, but it stood for something outside himself representative of justice—just as his patriotism stood for something outside himself representative of honor. Not to be in the slightest sacrilegious, God was a figure crowned with thorns just as Uncle Sam was a figure crowned with a starred top hat. Both were invincible. Yet both stood aside, helpless, before the Huns' advance.

They waited helplessly until the gray wolves reached Château-Thierry. Then the news was cabled across that the Marines were holding this line—not only technically but actually. Again and again the wolves came on and staggered back.

The Marines were there—the American Marines—and they were holding.

The first report brought the sweat to Carter's brow. Somewhere in that line without much doubt his son Ben was standing. The little boy he had carried in his arms was under that merciless fire of shrapnel and explosive shells and gas. Carter had read a good deal about the gas shells—the yellow and the blue and the green cross kind. It was devilish stuff. It burned into the lungs and the eyes and the skin. He remembered when it had first been used—had been sent sneaking across the allied lines like some ancient superstition made real. From that moment he had been for war.

He talked war with everyone he met, usually ending with the exclamation: "Uncle Sam won't stand for that sort of dirty work!"

As a matter of fact Uncle Sam had stood for it a good many months after that, and for acts even more barbaric. But now your Uncle Sam was right on the spot and Ben was on the spot. The two were one!

This was what Carter got hold of, suddenly, unexpectedly, unconsciously, as a man sees a vision. Uncle Sam was there not in the form of a middle-aged farmer in a starred top hat, but as one of the Marines, a tough, wiry young American fighter. And among these Marines was Ben, holding this ghastly line as in his play days he had helped to hold the football line. Uncle Sam was there as Carter's boy—blood of his blood and flesh of his flesh and soul of his soul. And so in a sense Carter himself was there. This was his fight too. He and Uncle Sam were one! He and the nation were one. He and the brilliant flags flying unharmed here in the streets of New York were one. As far as Carter individually was concerned he was essentially all there was of the nation—just as, individually and as far as his own soul was concerned, he was all there was of God. But because of this, because the thought made him so big, he took in the others too—his boy, Kitty, his neighbors, the state and the United States, and finally God himself. And this God not only stood for justice and honor but was justice and honor, and Carter was He and He was Carter.

Now God and Carter and the boy and the Marines and the nation were all standing side by side behind a

little town that until now had been no more conscious of itself than Carter had been. It had been merely Château-Thierry—a tiny village where simple men and women had gone about their humble business of living with little thought of the world at large. Now it was finding itself a turning point in the history of the world, with the sinewy young men from a country that had not been discovered when Château-Thierry already was hoary with age, rushing there to help keep it true. And with Carter some four thousand miles away staring from his office window and, quite unconscious of the business of the Atlas Company, praying not that the boy might be kept safe for his own sake, but that he might be spared to fight his best—Carter's best, the nation's best, God's best.

The Marines held, and then they did a little better; they began to advance. They say that Foch himself was none too sure of what these lads would find it possible to do. These men were getting their baptism of Hun fire, which is comparable to no fire this side of hell and which possibly may have introduced some new ideas into hell itself. Certainly neither Dante nor Milton revealed any conception of mustard gas.

Creeping forward on all fours the Marines advanced. It was grim business these boys were about, while the flags flew dreamily in the streets of New York and a thousand other cities from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico—flew dreamily and prettily for safe men to look up at and for safe women and children to smile at contentedly. It was serious business they were about to

the right and left of that old town, while the machines sped up and down Fifth Avenue bright in the summer sun. And yet when at length the cables flashed across the ocean the news that the old town had been won and all that meant, there was little in the message to hint of that grim business. And there was no mention at all of individuals—of the boy Ben who lay in a bit of woods like one asleep, his hair all tousled and his face dirty as he used to come in from play. But that night Carter went home with his head held high and his eyes alight.

When Carter opened the front door he was greeted with the smell of smoke from the kitchen. He hurried out there and found Mrs. Carter standing almost in tears before the charred remains of what had evidently been intended for a pie of some sort. She looked up anxiously as Carter entered. Her blue eyes began to fill with tears.

"Oh, Ben," she quavered, "I'm so sorry. I—I've been saving flour and sugar for a week to have enough to make you a real apple pie. And then—and then I forgot it. And—and——"

She made a despairing gesture toward the jet-black evidence of her unpardonable thoughtlessness. And then before Carter's accusing glance she shrank back and hid her face in the folds of her blue gingham apron.

Carter stared from her to the pie and then back to her. Fresh from the victory of Château-Thierry, this was such a pitiful travesty! She was crying—she, the mother of his son who had fought with the Marines

this day, was crying in fear of his anger because she had spoiled in the baking an apple pie.

Good Lord, to what depths had he sunk! To what pitiful depths of banality had he dragged her!

He strode to her side and seized her in his arms fiercely as a baffled lover.

"Kitty," he cried hoarsely, "look up at me!"

In amazement she obeyed. The clutch of his arms took her back twenty-five years. He saw the spring-time blue of her eyes.

"Kitty," he pleaded, "can you forgive me?"

"Forgive—you?" she stammered, not understanding.

"For making you think it matters a picayune what I have to eat. Little woman—little woman, we took Château-Thierry to-day!"

She drew back a little as though expecting evil news to follow. But the news had not yet come.

"We," he repeated—"you and I and Ben and the Marines and Uncle Sam and God—all together. We not only held the beasts but drove them back. It's in the papers to-night."

"And Ben——" she faltered.

"He must have been there," he answered.

"He—he——"

But she did not finish her timorous question. She caught the contagion of the fire in her husband's eyes and sealed her lips. And he, stooping, kissed those lips as he used to kiss them before the boy came.

The next morning Carter drank his coffee black, and when Kitty brought on the war doughnuts he shoved them aside.

"Don't make any more," he said. "Cut 'em out altogether. That's the trick."

And when on the eight-ten Newell came round with a recipe for making frosting without sugar, Carter refused to listen.

"Look here, Newell," he protested, "those confounded things don't interest me."

"They don't?" returned Newell ominously.

"Not a little bit," Carter continued calmly.

"You mean to tell me you aren't interested in conservation?"

"Did I say that?"

"Well, it amounts to the same thing, doesn't it?"

"Not on your tintype!" replied Carter. "Look here, Newell, you've been talking pretty plain to me lately and perhaps I've deserved it, but it leaves me free to give you a few ideas of my own. What we've got to do is to face this war—not duck it. We aren't going to win with substitutes but with sacrifices. The trouble with you and your crowd—the trouble with me—is that we've been trying to eat our cake and save it too. What's the use of those fool recipes of yours? The time has come to give up cake and pie and doughnuts—then why in thunder not give them up and be done with it?"

"But the Government doesn't ask that," cut in Newell.

"Who's the Government?" demanded Carter.

"Why—why——"

"You are. I am," Carter cut in, answering his own question. "That's all there is to it. And if you want

to understand how important you are, just multiply yourself by a hundred million. That's what Hoover does. Do it for yourself."

Newell smiled a little maliciously.

"Perhaps you're right, old man. By the way, I'm on this Third Liberty Loan committee, and if you'll tell me how much I can look ahead for from you it would help."

"Ten thousand dollars," answered Carter. "In the meantime, if you hear of anyone who wants to buy a house, let me know."

"You aren't going to leave us?"

"Not if I can hire a cheap place round town," answered Carter.

"Say—but you are plunging," exclaimed Newell uncomfortably.

"We can't let that Château-Thierry victory go for nothing," answered Carter quietly.

At last—at last Carter himself had declared war. That was why when he received a cable to the effect that Private Ben Carter was reported seriously wounded the man could sign his name firmly to the receipt.

The time had come for the Huns to take seriously the entry of the United States into the war.

—Frederick Orin Bartlett.

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